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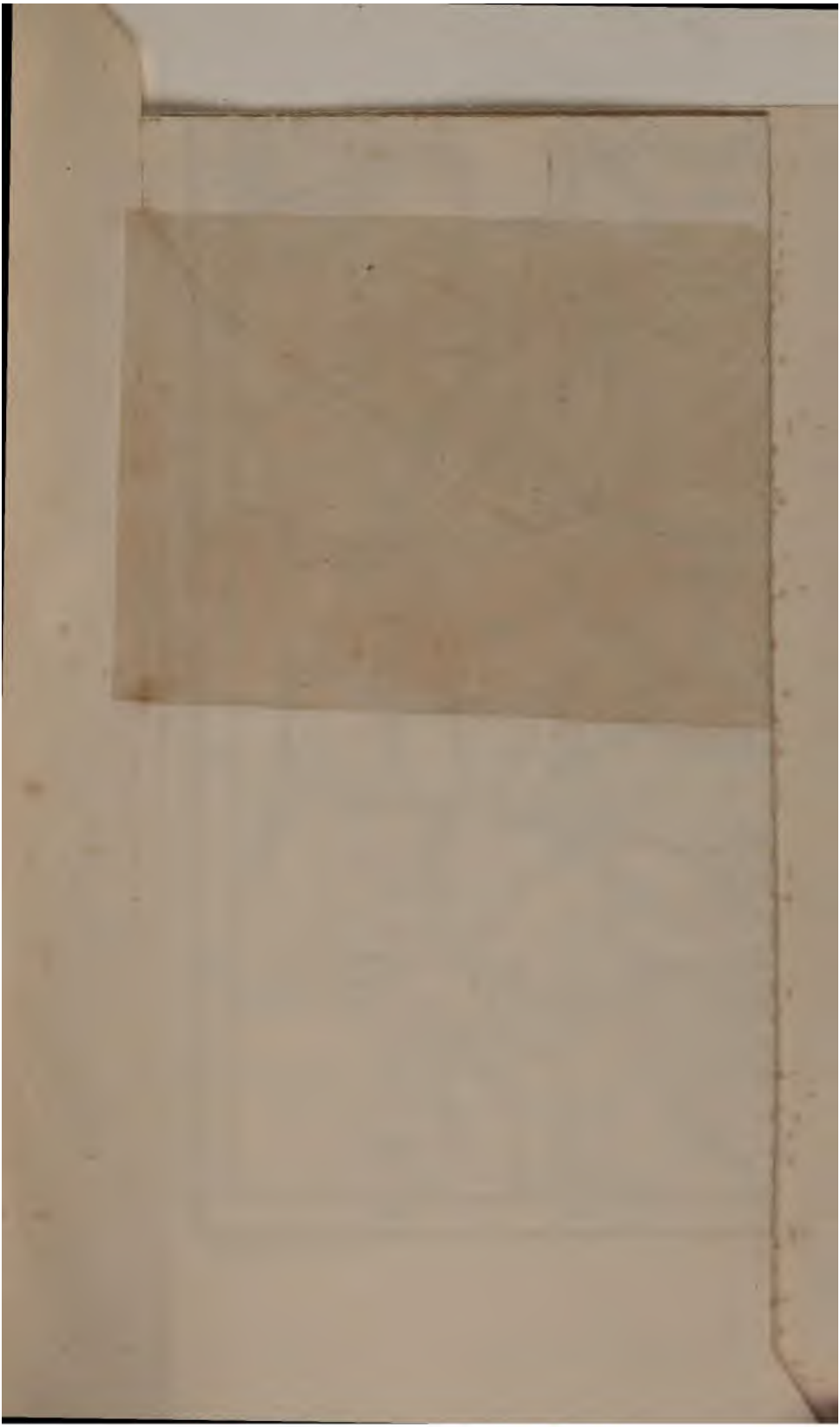
WITH WILSON IN MATABELELAND



WITH WILSON IN MATABELELAND

OR

SPORT AND WAR IN ZAMBESIA

BY

CAPTAIN C. H. W. DONOVAN
(*Of the Army Service Corps*)

WITH A MAP AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

LONDON
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TO

THE MEMORY OF

MAJOR WILSON, CAPTAIN LENDY,

AND ALL MY GALLANT COMRADES WHO LOST THEIR

LIVES IN EXTENDING THE BRITISH DOMINIONS

IN MATABELELAND,

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

PREFACE

THE production of this book has been delayed by reason of the time taken to re-write it. An officer of literary fame, to whom the MS. was submitted, pronounced it to be "too slangy for publication"; thereupon I endeavoured to alter my style to one in which I trust no one will find much cause for offence.

I have a pleasant task to perform in thanking Surgeon-Major W. G. Clements, A.M.S., Major Claridge (late 2nd West India Regiment), Mr. Schaus, Mr. Duncombe Jewell, and Mr. Herbert Canning, the courteous Secretary of the British South African Company, for services they have been good enough to render me.

The Eastern Photographic Materials Company, Ltd., have taken every care to develop the negatives of the No. 2 Kodak which I carried with me, and without which one of the features of this book would be entirely absent.

C. H. W. DONOVAN,
Capt. Army Service Corps.

COLCHESTER,
September 1894.

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PART I

SPORT

CHAPTER I

Arrival at Cape Town—Impressions—Interview with the Hon. Cecil Rhodes—His Insight into the Future—Difficulties about Guns—By Train to Pretoria—Characteristics of Pretoria—Arrangements for the Trip—The Start.

THE steamship *Lismore Castle*, after a prosperous and pleasant voyage of twenty-two days, dropped her anchor in Table Bay on May 6th, 1893, and very charming and picturesque was the prospect afforded in the early morning light by the white houses of Cape Town, nestling beneath the imposing flat-topped mountain, from which the Bay receives its name. It is difficult to believe, when viewed from the deck of a steamer lying at anchor, that this enormous Table rises to the height of three thousand feet above the sea.

It had long been an ambition of mine to shoot big game, but the chance of ever doing so had seemed remote enough until my friend George Bankes, who was going to South Africa on a hunting expedition, suggested that I should accompany him. Reflecting that I could hardly spend my well-earned leave, after a tour of service of eighteen months on the West coast, in a more congenial and profitable manner, I resolved to do so, little thinking at the time that my peaceable desire to see wild animals in their native haunts would end in fighting the savage Matabeles. We booked our passages on the *Lismore Castle*, which sailed from the West India Docks on the morning of April 13th; and after a voyage marked by a revival of that ancient ceremony of "King Neptune's visit," when crossing the Line, which, owing to the rapid strides of steam and electricity in this present age of Practicability and Hurry, has

fallen of late into desuetude—we arrived at Cape Town on the morning of the aforementioned May 6th.

CROSSING THE LINE. AWAITING ARRIVAL OF NEPTUNE.

Putting up at the Royal Hotel—where we were most hospitably welcomed by the host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander, who were old friends of my companion—we spent the better

part of the day in endeavouring to recover our guns and ammunition, which had been sent on before, and in noting some of the characteristics of the seat of the Cape Government. The town has been so often and so graphically described that it is unnecessary to record our impressions. Suffice it to say that the cleanliness and the width of its principal streets, with their excellent and well-fitted shop-fronts, and the many fine buildings—in particular that of the Standard Bank—struck us most forcibly. While sitting out on Plein Street in the evening, which was a Saturday, we found much to interest us in the ever-changing throng passing up and down, a moving subject of study in many-coloured dresses of every description of human being from every part of the globe. The Eastern raiment and bright-hued shawls and kerchiefs of the Malay women, with whom Cape Town appears to swarm, contrasted oddly enough

with the up-to-date costumes of their European and African sisters. The strong Malay element is especially remarkable, and they are said to be particular in keeping themselves aloof from their fellow-colonists. More especially careful are they in preventing their people from intermarrying with Europeans and other races.

Our original idea was to strike up country to Lake N'gami, and from thence to the Victoria Falls on the Zambesi River, returning by way of Forts Salisbury and Victoria, and so back to the Cape. With this object we had sent an experienced hunter before us to Pretoria to make all the necessary arrangements for the trip, in the way of securing wagons, oxen, horses, "boys," provisions, and so forth.

Bankes, however, going to pay a visit to the Premier, the Hon. Cecil Rhodes, and explaining our proposed route to that gentleman, returned with information which changed our plans alto-

gether. Mr. Rhodes strongly advised us to adopt a totally different route; "for," said he, "at the present time" (the month of May) "we "are on terms of the greatest friendship with all "the chiefs around; but by the time you will "be coming through Matabeleland, most pro- "bably about September or October, I should "not like to answer for your safe passage "through that country." Regarded in the light of later events, this advice seems distinctly prophetic.

It is doubtful whether any other man in South Africa could have seen so far into the future; certain, however, it is that nobody except this man of colossal schemes for the benefit of that part of the Empire which he has adopted, would have dared to have given utterance to such a prophecy at the time. Mr. Rhodes is too big a man for the understanding of the majority of mankind, who can seldom see farther than their

own noses. Needless to say, we took the advice which Mr. Rhodes had given us; otherwise perhaps we should not be here penning these pages.

OUR PARTY.

After visiting Sea Point, a delightful little spot some few miles from Cape Town, and reached either by train or tram, and devoting another day to Kalk Bay, where we spent an afternoon

fishing from the rocks with considerably greater success in point of numbers than with regard to size and weight of the fish captured, we completed our preparations, and took the train for Pretoria. For the information of intending sportsmen in South Africa, we may suggest here that it would be best to send forward their guns and cartridges, securely packed in tin-lined cases and distinctly marked, several weeks in advance, and, if they wish to pass through the Transvaal, by all means let them provide themselves with "Letters of Introduction" from influential people at home, setting forth who they are, and with what object they have entered the South African Republic. This course will save much vexation of spirit, many words which ought not to be included in their vocabulary, and much *time*, which may be even more valuable than the money involved. We had to pay a tax for the privilege of taking our guns through the Cape Colony, and

another tax upon entering the South African Republic; and certainly had it not been for the extreme courtesy of the Stationmaster at Cape Town, who most considerately arranged many little things for us, we should have been delayed another week, for "explosives" are not allowed to be carried save on one train only, and that a slow one, during the week. For which same reason, let us impress most strongly on *all* travellers that it is essential to be provided with "Safety" cartridges.

We were sorry to have been unable to visit some of the lovely scenery in the vicinity of Cape Town, more especially the mountains with their curious flat tops, through which our train speedily wound its way. There was no doubt that we were ascending, for the night became uncomfortably cold, and daylight revealed a coating of ice on the pools which lay beside the railroad track. With occasional stoppages, and

to the accompaniment of frequent whistling by the engine (in order to frighten sheep or ostriches off the line), we pursued our journey—baked by day, frozen by night, and deluged in dust all the time.

At Elandsfontein, on the Transvaal frontier, we were turned out early one morning, and our entire belongings overhauled by a number of suspicious and obtrusive officials, who appeared to labour under the impression that we were coming up solely with the intention of avenging a certain episode in South African history, which is best left unmentioned by Britishers. A new ·303 rifle by Bland, of the Strand, was the cause of much head-shaking and many uncouth remarks, it being evidently considered eminently unsuitable for the purpose to which we said it would be devoted, *viz.*, testing its powers of penetration on thick-skinned animals. At length, by dint of much grumbling on the part of the

other passengers, who very righteously objected to the delay, the necessary paper was signed, British gold transferred to the Transvaal exchequer, and

OUR "BOYS."

we resumed our journey, accompanied, however, by a South African Republic customs official, sent forward in order to see us alight at Pretoria —a proceeding which amused without incom-

moding us so long as we were able to keep our tempers.

At Pretoria we found Alfred, our hunter, who had got together the wagons, teams, horses, and "boys," and was "outspanned" at a place some eight miles from the town. We had one large "half-tent" wagon for stores and sleeping in, and one small covered wagon (or "wagonette"), with teams of sixteen oxen in each—"eight-span" as it is called. We had five horses, and four "boys," who filled the positions of cooks, grooms, leaders, and drivers. With this cavalcade we started for Pietersburg, taking principally canned meat, with plenty of flour, onions, and potatoes, as provisions.

Pretoria is chiefly remarkable for its handsome Government Buildings—designed and built (I was informed) by French and British artists; its huge market-place, crowded with oxen and wagons; its horse-auction; and its general air

of being abreast of the times. The whole town is lighted by electricity, telephonic communication is established between the various houses and business establishments, and the public buildings are very imposing. We called to pay our respects to President Kruger, generally known as "Oom Paul," but on account of it being a public holiday—days of rest which appear to be more frequent in the Transvaal than in England, according to the almanacks—we were unfortunate in finding him "not at home."

CHAPTER II

The Journey to Pietersburg—Duck Shooting—Lost in the Bush — Spring-boks — Fishing and Shooting — Native Kraals — Makapan's-poort — Butterflies — A Cavalry Officer as a Bar Keeper—Queen's Birthday—Celebrations at Pietersburg—Races—Purchase of a Horse—Departure from Pietersburg.

WE rode in the fast closing hours of darkness out of Pretoria to the spot where our wagons were "outspanned" alongside the road, and enjoyed, for the first time, the novel experience of sleeping in a wagon, the commencement of the most pleasant epoch of my life. It was from here that our hunting expedition really started. We did not anticipate meeting anything in the shape of big game until we crossed the Limpopo, so we trekked along from day to day,

occasionally meeting with and shooting a few partridges and korkorhaan—a species of small bustard, of which there are several kinds. My first shot at a small steen-bok was amusing enough to be recorded, my only regret being that I could not be both performer and witness of the episode. We were riding through a bit of bush in line, at a distance of about forty yards from each other, when a small buck got up and ran back. I instantly proceeded to dismount, in the orthodox manner as laid down in the "Cavalry Exercises"; but in doing so the saddle slipped round under the horse, and I?—well, I found myself upon my back, on African soil, with my foot in the stirrup, while the buck was "making tracks" as hard as he could lay leg to ground. I managed to squirm round and loose off a shot after him, but, needless to say, without effect; and my vexation at having thus bungled this my first shot was not dispelled by the amount of amusement which my per-

formance had evidently afforded my companions. I took care that it never happened again—in public.

The country, its animal, vegetable, bird, and insect life, the mode of travelling, and, in fact, the whole experience, were all as novel to me as they were interesting; and the scarcity of game hereabouts did not affect our spirits much, as we were sure of meeting with plenty later on. Hard by a roadside store (Dutch "winkel") we found a "vley," a sort of shallow lake or hollow, in which the water lies after the rains, the surface of which was covered with ducks, it being the only piece of open water for many miles round. We spent a couple of hours at sundown shooting not a few of these ducks. We were accompanied by the store-keeper, who was anxious to secure the food, but begrudged expending his own powder and lead in the attempt. We were, however, able to supply both his larder and

our own, besides enjoying very fair sport, while affording even better entertainment to the mosquitoes, which were more numerous, vicious, and persistent than any I have ever fallen in with in other parts of this continent.

A few mornings later I left the camp early while they were preparing breakfast, intending to be absent for half an hour or so, on the chance of getting a shot at something. I struck gaily into the bush, which was pretty thick ; and after some time, not meeting with anything shootable, I turned round, and walked, as I believed, towards the wagons. After marching for more than an hour, I began to think it strange that I had failed to strike the road, and to fear that I had missed my way. It being cloudy, I had not observed where the sun had risen ; and so, having made various essays to find the right direction, without effect, I began firing round after round in the vain hope of my rifle being heard and

answered by somebody in the camp; but I might have more profitably saved the ammunition, for the silence of the bush remained undisturbed save by the hum of the insects. I climbed a tree —the highest I could find—from which I hoped to be able to see some recognisable point towards which I could get a line of direction; however, nothing was visible but one vast, unbroken extent of bush stretching around me on every side as far as the eye could see. It was now midday, and I was both hungry and thirsty, while visions of nights spent in trees, surrounded by troops of roaring lions seeking to devour my emaciated body, flitted through my mind. With an effort I pulled myself together, and recollecting that lions did not frequent this part of the country, and that the road we were travelling ran in a north-easterly direction, I started again, taking a line due north. Eventually finding an old wagon spoor, which I followed, I presently struck the

road at a place some miles in rear of the spot where we had outspanned during the night. On arriving at the site of our camp I found the wagons had gone on, and I did not overtake them until evening. It was a wholesome lesson to me; and I learnt from my experience that morning always to watch the direction in which I was going, and to retain a sort of instinctive feeling as to the situation of the camp. When out in the "veldt," where everything looks the same, and where there are no landmarks, it is absolutely necessary to cultivate the "homing" instinct possessed by pigeons in order to guard against being lost. I heard of one unfortunate young fellow, whom I afterwards met with the Salisbury Column, who was lost for forty days on the Crocodile River, and who, when eventually discovered in an ant-bear hole, had completely lost his reason, as well as his teeth, which latter were destroyed by eating the roots

and berries upon which he had subsisted. He was altogether in a most pitiable condition, and took a long time to recover from the effects of his adventure.

While crossing Spring-bok Flats, we had a great hunt after a troop of the nimble little bucks which give the district its name. It was a pretty sight to see them galloping along, and making the marvellous springs into the air from which their name is derived. To watch them thus was to me—to whom everything was new—almost as interesting as to shoot them ; but if one were to do nothing but gaze and admire there would be no chance of seeing what they were like at close quarters, for it does not take many seconds for a troop of bucks to put themselves beyond the range of fire-arms. We shot one ; but two others whom we wounded got away and rejoined the herd ; and as I had to ride after the horse of one of my companions, which had escaped from its

rider, and was fast disappearing in the direction of the spot where we had left the wagons, I could not follow them. That is the worst part of this South African shooting, the knowledge that so many animals are wounded, and escape without any chance of recovery, and with the certainty of dying a lingering death. By the time I had re-captured the runaway and returned it to its owner the bucks were too far off to be successfully pursued. I should have enjoyed another day after them, as the open country in which they delight makes it possible to watch every turn, twist, and jump of the herd. And, after all, seeing new animals in their natural condition is almost equal to the pleasure of killing them.

Halting for the night on one occasion near a small river, we spent several hours in the evening catching "Silver-fish" with a small trout fly. They afforded us capital sport; and we repeated it next morning, much to the

astonishment of some Dutch transport riders, who were going up country, and seemed to be unable to grasp the fact that it was possible to catch fish otherwise than with a bait.

Zebedilla's Kraal was the first big native encampment which we saw, having reached Anzimowon's Kraal after dark, and started again before it was light enough to obtain a proper idea of it. Zebedilla's Kraal consists of a large collection of little huts massed together within a thick fence of high cactus—a most formidable obstacle to the forward movement of an enemy. A constant succession of women carrying water, numberless little black children running away from the white men, and plenty of mangy, half-starved dogs, were the principal features. We passed through Makapan's-poort, a pass which is famous as the scene of the massacre by Kaffirs of a Dutch "trek" in the early days of colonisation, the women and children being

butchered by the natives while the men were away hunting. It is needless to say that the revenge taken on the Kaffirs was severe, and, to this day, is spoken of with bated breath. Makapan's-poort was one of the few really pretty places which we passed in our travels, and it was here I saw more butterflies than in any other place. Smith's-dorp is a miserable-looking place, which could be hardly dignified with the title of "town": deserted by the people who flocked there when it promised to become a gold-mining centre, it now consists chiefly of a couple of bars and a small store or two. When it became evident that gold did not exist in sufficient quantities to repay the trouble of working, the majority of the inhabitants migrated to Pietersburg, about one day's trek beyond; in which town may be seen a long street containing some uncommonly smart and well-filled stores, where almost everything requisite for European comfort

and civilisation may be obtained. Bars appear to predominate. At one of them we found as proprietor an ex-cavalry officer, who told us that "he was making a deal sight more money than when soldiering in a crack cavalry regiment at home"—a statement which experience teaches us to accept unreservedly.

The day following that of our arrival happened to be the Queen's Birthday; and in celebration thereof a general holiday was proclaimed. We were persuaded to remain and attend the race-meeting, which had been organised to commemorate the event in addition to the firing of a Royal salute. I was anxious to see a Transvaal race meeting; and the fact that a pony we proposed to purchase was entered for one race at the "Gymkhana Meeting under the auspices of the Zoutpansberg Turf Club," decided us to lose a day in order to be present. The course was a fair one, with a grand-stand erected over

the inevitable refreshment bar. Alongside the course were ranged wagons, traps, buggies, spiders, and every other sort of conveyance; while those who did not possess a vehicle of any description had ridden to the spot, and a crowd of horses was tied up all round the paddock. Every one seemed to know every one else, and a general air of good fellowship prevailed. A certain few were ready and willing to lay odds, but the bulk of the speculation was in the form of sweepstakes. The first two events, for which small fields appeared, were free from excitement, save that an old horse, named Raft, which had done excellent work in his day, and had his number hoisted many a time on the Johannesburg racecourse, broke down after winning his race. A couple of footraces, including one for "boys," followed, and were, in turn, succeeded by *the* event of the day—namely, the firing of a salute of twenty-one

dynamite cartridges, at the end of which salvo all the Britishers present took off their hats and sang "God save the Queen!" following this up with three cheers for Her Majesty, given in such ringing, enthusiastic style, that the Dutchmen who heard it will scarcely forget that outburst of loyalty to their beloved Sovereign on the part of her subjects so far from home. To us it was highly gratifying to find that our countrymen, though circumstances have decreed that they shall live elsewhere, do not forget the old country or their Queen. For the Open Handicap, value £10, all the competitors were scratched, except Mr. Zeederberg's "Exchange," which consequently had a "walk over." His owner, however, declined to receive the stakes, as there had been "no race," and returned the money to the Club. In the trotting race which followed, the pony "Whisky," which we wanted to buy, was winning anyhow, but, breaking

his trot just before reaching the stand, he had to be pulled up, turned round, and re-started, during which manœuvring another shot by him and won. A donkey race, marked by the customary accidents ; a race for "men over forty" with, as prize, a bottle of "fiz"; and a "Nigger Race" brought the meeting to a termination. And, having completed the purchase of "Whisky," we rode off to overtake our wagons, which had gone on to "outspan" at Rhenooster-poort. We were reluctantly compelled to refuse invitations sent us to a forthcoming dance, as we did not care to delay longer, the time at our disposal being limited, and it being a little late in the season for starting. At Pietersburg we said "good-bye" to the last signs of civilisation for several months.

CHAPTER III

Captain Oscar Dohl — Piet Duploy — Snakes — "Wolves" and "Tigers"—The Salt-pans—Rest at Fatfontein—Elephant Skulls — Koodoo and Wildebeestes — Brak River—The Horses stray—Old Dutch Hunter—Boabab Trees—Traps—The Limpopo—Commandant Raaff—Licences.

AT Rhenooster-poort we met Captain Oscar Dohl, who treated us most hospitably, and, I am sure, would have been only too glad to have given us anything at all that he possessed that he thought would possibly assist us. As it was, he furnished us with a supply of literature, which proved most acceptable later on, and added large quantities of dried peaches, etc., to our stores. He lives in a curious old castle, built after his own design to afford protection in days gone

by against the Kaffir raids. That was long before civilisation had penetrated thus far up-country. I was sorry not to have had the pleasure of passing through Rhenooster-poort on my return, and accepting the proffered hospitality of the captain, as well as a shot at "rea-boks" he promised. All the game on his land is carefully preserved.

Hard by the Castle is an old octagonal iron portable (!) fort, which was capable of holding some fifty men or so—who would have certainly been safe from Kaffirs while inside the fort; but it would be interesting to know how many would have been alive after a siege of a week or ten days' duration cooped up in this iron box.

Piet Duploy, a Dutch hunter, had been engaged to meet us here, in order to act as interpreter, and to guide us to a part of the country in which he and his old father-in-law had made a successful hunting expedition a few

years previously. At Rhenooster-poort we also exchanged our little wagon for a half-tent one.

We met with nothing of much interest until we reached the Salt-pans, from which this district Zoutpansberg derives its name; a huge, shallow lake, at this time of year dry, where the Kaffirs occupy themselves in digging holes and evaporating the water which oozes through the sand—operations which result in the deposit of a very fair salt. We encountered a few snakes; and the marvellous stories which the "boys" told us about their powers of jumping backwards and striking their prey with their poison-fangs, helped *en passant* to pass the time, while waiting for dinner. From this point our oxen had a very weary pull through the sand all night; and while out-spanned we heard the hideous, unearthly cry of a "wolf," which is what the Boers call the common spotted hyena. A

Boer told me that these "wolves" are hermaphrodites, which will, I fancy, be a new theory to scientists and natural historians. I have since, however, heard this statement corroborated by an old Matabeleland trader, who informed me that he "had killed hundreds of them in his time, and so ought to know something about what he was saying." I am sorry I did not avail myself of the opportunities of judging for myself as to the truth of such a surprising theory. The Boers also give the name "tiger" to the ordinary leopard, of which there are many about.

At Fatfontein we halted for two days to rest the oxen, wearied by the long pull through the heavy sand. There is a hot spring here, in which I noticed a couple of fish, but was unable to catch one or to discover to what species it belonged. Here we also found an old elephant's head, from which the ivory had been removed, which, howbeit many years had elapsed since it formed part

of a living animal, was a sign that at length we were approaching the land of big game. The sight made us, if possible, keener than before, and more anxious to get forward. In the meanwhile we contented ourselves with shooting a few steenboks (*Nanotragus Campestris*) and duikers (*Cephalolophus Grimmii*), which are small bucks of a similar type. And at sundown, when they came down to drink, we had some nice shots at "namaqua," and other partridges.

It was in this neighbourhood that I saw my first koodoo (*Strepsiceros Kudu*)—a bull—a lovely animal, which stood watching Piet (who was in front of me, and unaware of the bull's presence, he being hidden by a thick bush), his grand spiral horns reflecting the sun from each curve. I was so struck with astonishment and delight that, instead of firing, hitting, and admiring afterwards, I pulled up, and involuntarily felt bound to pay homage to such a glorious

masterpiece of Nature, and could not repress an exclamation of joy, which, reaching the noble animal's ears, caused him to disappear through the thick bush with greater rapidity than I could follow him. Of course it was a foolish action on my part, although I should be loth to blame any one for acting similarly. Near this place we were lucky enough to meet with a troop of wildebeestes (*Connochetes Taurinus*), of which we bagged one. It was a curious animal, a compound of horse, antelope, and buffalo, of an ugliness so marvellous that we thought it calculated to frighten even a lion. Our Zoological Society is to be congratulated upon the birth of one of these curious-looking animals in the Regent's Park Gardens this year—the first, I believe, which has ever been born in captivity.

A calamity befell us on the Brak River (so called from the 'bitter' taste of its water, which is impregnated with saltpetre), where one of the

"boys" carelessly allowed the horses to stray; and we could not collect them again for more than a week. Oom Piet, while seeking for the horses, met a Dutchman on his old "Lisburn" at Fatfontein, and the others were recovered at the Salt-pans, fortunately uninjured, having travelled some thirty odd miles back towards their old homes by themselves. This faculty which animals possess of being able to find their way back to any place which they have once visited is very remarkable. Oxen are most useful animals for transport purposes when one is in no particular hurry, but they require the expenditure of much patience, especially when—as did one of ours—they slip into a deep pool, and refuse absolutely to exert themselves sufficiently to keep their own heads above water, until positively dragged on to dry land by the horns.

While waiting for our horses, we passed the time by wandering about in search of various

small bucks, missing more than we bagged. I tried fishing, and succeeded in landing a tortoise ("skull-pat") which had most unwisely swallowed the bait and hook; its shell was covered with mud and slime, which emitted anything but a pleasant odour, and I fear that I injured the feelings of some of our "boys," by positively refusing to permit them to roast this unfortunate reptile, until they had killed it by chopping off its head; they do not understand the sin of cruelty. Our "boys" set a trap made of reeds fixed in the earth, and succeeded in catching a small animal very similar to that which we used to know as a "ground-pig" (*Aulacodus Swinderenianus*) on the west coast, but which I have since been told is an agouti. During one of these short expeditions we came across a fresh giraffe-spoor, which we followed, unfortunately to no practical purpose. On crossing a very beautiful river and climbing the rocks, we found

traces of stone walls similar to those which we afterwards saw at Zimbabye, and I succeeded in securing a specimen of a handsome *Charaxes* butterfly. Here also we found "tiger" spoor. One of our "boys" said that he had seen and hit a "tiger" near the camp, but we failed to find it, although circumstantial evidence of the firing of the alleged fatal shot was exhibited in the shape of three cartridges and a discharged gun. While lying here fretting and fuming over the delay caused by the loss of our horses, many wagons passed us going up country, and I renewed the acquaintance (which was later on, under very different circumstances, to be cemented into friendship) of the Rixon brothers whom we had met at Pietersburg. From one of the wagons an old Dutchman came across to our camp, who, according to his own account, had hunted over nearly every square yard of South Africa, from the Zambesi to Cape Town,

and from Walfish Bay to Delagoa Bay. After being regaled on several cups of coffee, he recounted for our open-mouthed edification the many daring adventures which he had experienced in the days gone by, when game was more plentiful than it now is. Of buffaloes he had been the slaughterer of thousands, and he gravely informed us that once, while "on the trek," he was obliged to halt his wagon to allow a herd of these creatures to cross his path. This was about seven o'clock in the morning; and he solemnly asseverated that those buffaloes were trekking in such vast numbers across the road that he was unable to proceed until four o'clock in the afternoon. I am convinced that this Dutch hunter had no idea that he was relating anything but the solemn truth.

Our horses having been all brought back uninjured, we made for the Limpopo (Crocodile) River, beyond which our shooting proper was to

commence. Before reaching its banks, however, I shot a pig, or "wart-hog" (*Phacochœrus Æthiopicus*), as ugly a beast as it is possible to imagine, having enormous excrescences on its forehead and face. It was a fine sight to watch him pursued by "Uptell," one of the dogs, turning every now and then to make drives and digs at the old dog with his glittering tusks, while his tail and every bristle on his body stuck on end like "quills upon the fretful porpentine." I wished then that I could have carried my Kodak with me in addition to my gun. It would have materially added to the interest of the collection of photographs which this handy little camera has helped me to preserve.

Throughout this part of the country the everlasting monotony of the low scrub is broken by the enormous bare Baobab or "Cream-of-Tartar" trees, which lift their naked points, which do duty for branches, into the air above the thorn

bushes. Their huge trunks always reminded me in a curious way of elephants, so ponderous and unwieldy was their appearance. In the hollows at the top the traveller, by climbing, will often find water from which to augment his supply if it has given out. They are supposed to be of great, though unknown, age; and one can easily imagine them forming vast primeval forests, in whose shade the Megatheria and Dinosauri might have made their homes and roamed around, unmolested by man. Large seed-pods hang suspended from the pointed branches, and take, I believe, several years in which to arrive at a state of maturity. When broken open they are found to contain the white cream-of-tartar powder, which both Boers and Kaffirs dissolve in water, and so prepare a nice, slightly acid, drink, considered to possess great medicinal properties. We certainly found the seeds decidedly palatable when sucked in the mouth. The "assvogels"

(vultures) perch themselves on the topmost branches, and from thence survey the land in search of carrion.

Finding the carcass of an ox at the place we had selected for our outspan, within a short trek of the Limpopo, we set a couple of traps which we had brought with us, and were speedily startled by unearthly howls proceeding from the direction in which the unsavoury bait lay. It was dark, but with the aid of lights we discovered one of our pack of hounds, who was evidently unsatisfied with her own dinner, and had gone off to make a second meal off putrid ox, and paid for her greediness in one of the traps. Her leg was too badly hurt to give us any chance of trying our hands at practical surgery with any hope of success, and so poor "Nell" had to be destroyed. We reset the trap, tied up all the remaining dogs, and lay down to sleep; but in the small hours of the morning we heard a trap spring, and the

sounds of gnawing, growling, and roaring, accompanied by the ceaseless barking of the dogs, disturbed our slumbers. We could see nothing until daybreak, when the dogs soon showed us that there was something in the long reeds close by. We took our guns and went towards the place, when we were rather amused to see our guides and hunter hastily skip up trees, "to see where he was," they explained. George Bankes, however, saw a "tiger's" head, and a bullet through the forehead brought him down without a growl. His skin was attractive, but we felt there was little satisfaction in killing a beast in a trap. The "boys," nevertheless, were exceedingly delighted, and were not long in extracting and hanging up to dry all sorts of queer bits of the animal's interior, for use as "medicine," which later on we observed they disposed of to other natives, with no small profit to themselves.

We crossed the Limpopo or Crocodile River, as it is variously named, at the Middle Drift. It is a broad river at this point, with a heavy sandy

CROSSING LIMPOPO RIVER, MIDDLE DRIFT.

bottom, and a sharp pull up the bank on the north side. We caught a few silver fish with a fly, and some "barbers" (a description of barbel), with locusts for bait. From Middle Drift

Bankes went down to Tuli to see Commandant Raaff. Alas! poor man, he, in company with many other brave fellows, is now lost to us for ever! We had some little difficulty here about licences, but it was easily overcome, and we did not take long to cross into Mashonaland.

While we remained at Middle Drift the Chartered Company's police had gone out and captured a Dutchman who had been shooting without the requisite licence; so all his "Biltong," and the hides of five giraffes and several elands that he had killed, and a couple of small quaggas he had caught, were sold by auction on the spot, the net results of the sale being far from satisfactory to the poacher. The example thus made was very necessary, the Dutchmen being very loud in their refusal to pay for licences to shoot, and in defying the Company to enforce their own laws. This prompt action on the part of Commandant Raaff soon brought them to their knees.

The prohibition of shooting without one of these licences is, in our opinion, an excellent act on the part of the Chartered Company, for which

CHARTERED COMPANY'S POLICE.

every true sportsman and lover of nature should thank them. It is done for the benefit of genuine sportsmen, and to prevent the animals from becoming extinct, the Dutchmen being in the

habit of entering the country and shooting down every animal that comes in their way, very frequently for the mere sake of the hides, leaving the meat for the vultures. If wholesale slaughter like this were not checked the result would be annihilation of all the fauna of the district; and the care of the Company to preserve sufficient game for sportsmen proper cannot be too highly commended.

The ordinary licence which the Company issues does not cover the shooting of elephants, giraffes, ostriches, hippopotami, and rhinoceroses; and we are pleased to have this opportunity of thanking the Administrator for his courtesy in granting us a "permit" to shoot these animals. We also took out prospectors' licences, in the hopes of discovering some payable gold.

CHAPTER IV

Hunting on the Veldt—Fishing: the Tiger-fish—Death of "Whisky"—"Bismarck" Salts—Fight between an Eagle and a Bustard—On the Bubyé—Buffaloes and Lions—"Assvogels"—Riet-fontein—Elands—Our Dog "Uptell"—"A Hair of the Dog that bit you"—We cross the Wanetze.

WE formed a camp on the Umzingwané River, a few miles from the Police Camp at the Middle Drift, and remained there until Bankes returned from Tuli with letters. During this period I had some capital fishing at the junction of the Umzingwane and the Crocodile Rivers, with a sixteen-feet greenheart rod by Enright of Castle Connell, two hundred yards of line, and a bright spoon bait. In one stretch of water in the course of a very few hours we

caught twenty-two fish, weighing, in the aggregate, upwards of seventy-six pounds. We might easily have increased this quantity, had we wished to do so, as, although we started early, the pool was some distance from camp, and occupied us some two hours to reach through the bush ; the heat of the sun reflected from the water was also trying, and as the fish were biting freely, we did not hesitate to rest during the middle of the day, and cook some of our prey. These "tiger-fish," as they are called, are prettily shaped, with bright, silvery scales, sharply pointed fins, and tails of a reddish hue, and a small, red, adipose fin. Their enormous heads, sadly out of proportion to their symmetrical bodies, detract from their otherwise pleasing appearance, and are armed with formidable teeth on the outside of the jaw, which necessitates the use of a strong wire trace, to prevent not only the loss of one's fish, but also that of the bait. Even

then they sometimes bite through the wire. The appearance of the jaw suggests that they should be more appropriately called "crocodile" fish; but the Boers have given them the name of "tiger-fish" because their spots resemble those of the leopard! They are remarkably game, and will take the bait and a hundred yards of line out without a moment's hesitation. Then, away they go into the air, time after time, shaking their heads, and trying to get rid of the nasty triangle in their jaws. You may wind your line gradually in, but on feeling the slightest jerk off they are again, and more than half the time out of the water. The skin on their bony mouths is so thin that it affords but small hold for the hook; and consequently, for each one eventually landed, you will have had half-a-dozen "runs."

It was really good sport; and although seventy-six pounds, exclusive of those cooked

for lunch, was our best bag, still I went down each succeeding day, and considered I was well rewarded for my trouble. The largest fish caught here weighed eight and a half pounds; but George Bankes has taken them, on the Latabe River, weighing over thirty pounds! I noticed that the tiger-fish kept together in shoals, and that they bit most freely when the water was ruffled by a breeze. They take also most readily anything glittering and spinning; but we could not persuade them to take locusts. Personally, I was most successful with a spinner, with a red-and-white worsted tag, which I had procured from Bernard, of Piccadilly. Bankes has used a big fly of his own manufacture, composed of gold tinsel and peacock's feathers, with great success. The tiger-fish is evidently of somewhat æsthetic tastes. I have been told that they are a sea-going fish; and as I have been further informed that they can be caught at Lake

N'gami, it would be interesting to know how they get up the Victoria Falls, which I think is too formidable an obstacle for any salmon to be able to overcome. We did not catch any in the Lundi River, or its tributary the Umtelique, although we spent many hours in endeavouring to do so. One would like to know more about this fish, which affords nearly as good sport as that king of all fish, the salmon, and I should be glad to hear from any one who has enjoyed either the sport of catching or the pleasure of eating it.

The day following that on which Bankes returned from Tuli, a gentleman who had accompanied us thus far bade us good-bye and set off for Tuli; we starting at the same time, across the Umzingwané in a north-easterly direction, heading for the Bubyé River, and shooting only a few koodoo on the way. A lot of our time, which was rapidly becoming precious, was wasted

here looking for giraffes, a herd having been seen in this district a short while previously; without success, however, although we climbed

QUAGGAS.

every kopje, and from the tops of the highest trees scanned the horizon in every direction. I sat for a long time one day on the summit of a kopje, watching a troop of quaggas (*Equus*

Burchelli) roaming about in the bush below me, and totally unconscious of my presence. I always feel rather like a dog with a cat; for as long as animals are quiet I am content to let them be, but directly they begin to gallop then I must needs gallop too, thirsting to have their blood. It is a curious trait in man's character, that he should be keenly bent on killing some animal, and no sooner has the fatal shot been fired than he feels sorrow and regret for the poor dead creature at his feet. And yet he will do precisely the same next day, or even five minutes later, if chance or opportunity offer!

We met with a sad loss in the death of poor little "Whisky," whom we purchased at Pietersburg as a guaranteed "salted horse," and who was as good a mount as one could wish to possess. He died of that terrible scourge to the whole of South Africa, "horse-sickness." It was painful to a degree to watch the poor

animal when, galloping strong and well after a troop of roan antelope, it suddenly broke down. I dismounted, and, not liking the look of him, whipped off the saddle, and stood watching his heaving flanks, and the horrible fluid running from his nostrils, and I instantly realised—oh, how forcibly!—that I was an unwilling witness of a severe case of this hopeless disease. He would fling himself down upon the ground, and struggling again to his feet, would come towards me with a most beseeching look in his eyes, as though imploring me to render him some assistance in his dire distress; while I had to sit there, and turn my back upon him, to shut out the painful sight, which was torturing me, for I felt that I could do—nothing. We got him into camp; but he died in the evening, choked with this cursed "bile," as the Dutchmen call it. It is melancholy to reflect that nothing can be found to cure this disease. We had another young

pony, "Bismarck," who "salted" a couple of days distant from the Bubyé river, while we were encamped under a picturesque range of bushy kopjes.

There is a story told of a certain paymaster, who, after the Zulu War, rendered his accounts to the War Office, and in them was an entry anent a "salted horse." Some officious and ignorant young clerk queried the item, saying, "Surely this should be included in the Supply Accounts?" I trust that my readers have sufficient knowledge of the class of meat which is supplied to their soldiers by my corps, and also of South African parlance, to know better than the War Office clerk.

A "salted" horse is one which has had an attack of "horse-sickness" and recovered from it. He is then worth many times as much money as an unsalted horse; for the former is not liable to contract the disease again, and if he does, it will

be only in a mild form and not likely to prove fatal. I noticed that "salted" horses never seemed to have much spirit—or "illimint," as they say in Ireland—about them; they will "go," but it appears more as a duty than as a pleasure to themselves.

On the north side of this range we found a vast tract of flat, open country presenting a park-like aspect; and here, when out in search of bucks, we came one day on a track which had been burnt. We noticed many paauws (*Eupodotes Kori*), a species of large bustard; and witnessed the swoop of a large eagle on one of them. Riding towards the struggling mass of grey, brown, and black feathers, the eagle flew away, and we killed the paauw, whose breast was completely torn open; and it bore also a large wound in the back. The fight only occupied a moment; and a paauw is no easy bird to attack, being as large in the body as a turkey,

with longer legs and neck and a more powerful beak.

We remained here several days to allow "Bismarck" a chance of recovering, and also on account of the rain, which fell continuously for two days. Game abounded, but as we were intent on giraffes (which we knew were to be found in the vicinity) we did not shoot much. On Bubyé River we saw our first lion and heard either a lion or a leopard kill a buck in close proximity to our camp one night; but although we set the traps next night near the body of the crinkhart (*Kobus Ellipsiprymnus*) which it had killed, it evidently suspected that the carcass had been tampered with, for we neither heard nor saw anything more of his majesty.

A couple of Dutchmen told us that they had seen buffels' (*Bubalus Caffer*) spoor near that very morning, and volunteered to show us where they had been down to drink; so away we went,

and, sure enough, there we beheld their enormous hoof-marks in the mud. We followed the spoor right along for several hours, at times racing with a breast-high scent over open country, or through thick bush, and anon casting around to regain the line, which was scarcely visible, as the herd had crossed some hard, stony ground. The chase was now becoming exciting. There were many indications that we were close upon our quarry. Not a word was spoken; absolute silence prevailed as we spread out once more to find the spoor which we had temporarily lost. I entered a patch of very dense bush, when suddenly it appeared to me as if the entire bush was being carried away by the rush of ponderous dark forms which swept past. A big bull broke away to the right, and, driving my spurs into "Wit-foot," I gave chase as fast as the thorny thicket would permit. We were fortunate enough to get four buffaloes here, which were

duly "gralloched" and left for the wagons to convey to camp; but on going in the morning to bring them in, we heard some lions growling over the feast of our providing. However, they decamped before we could get on any terms with them, nor did they permit us to see their faces. Thus does the King of Beasts retire before man.

The "assvogels" used to swoop down in clouds on the remains of our victims. It is marvellous how these birds are able to scent blood. The sky may be absolutely clear, without a speck to break its blue or grey monotony; but directly a buck is shot, vultures can be seen coming from every direction, and circling round and round above the spot, until the human provider of the expected feast has left. In order to prevent these birds from destroying the game which has been shot, it is customary to cut off branches of trees and bush where-

with to cover it until the oxen arrive to drag it home. This is one of the drawbacks to sport; for after killing the animal, removing its intestines, and protecting the carcass with branches, the fortunate sportsman has to ride back to camp and return with some of the oxen to the spot—probably many miles distant—where the game is lying. It is at such a time that the instinct for finding one's way without landmarks or signposts becomes most essential, for it is naturally most galling and mortifying to have brought out the oxen and boys a long way into the veldt, only to find that you are unable to discover the spot where your buck or other animal is lying. Practice in this, as in all else, makes perfect; but I usually adopted the plan of following my horse's spoor until I saw the "assvogels" circling round in the air, or perched on the trees, gloating in anticipation over the pleasures of the impending banquet.

All bucks were brought into camp: and whatever meat we did not require for our immediate use was cut into lumps, mixed with salt, and covered up for twenty-four hours in the hide. It was then hung up on sticks to dry into "biltong," which is very palatable and easily transported, and, as it retains all the nutritive qualities of the meat, is also very sustaining.

We caught many large "barbers" in the backwater from which we drew our supply. They are not palatable compared with "tiger-fish," of which we carried a stock, split and dried. To a new comer who is told that he is in sight of a "river," the wide expanse of sand, without apparently a drop of water, is certainly a surprise. A careful search will reveal some spot at which water may be obtained, in many cases only by scraping a hole in the sand, when the water slowly filters through.

At Riet-fontein we shot three elands (*Oreas*

Canna), one of which—an old bull—had evidently been a famous warrior, and had experienced a couple of very narrow escapes. There was a bullet-hole through one of his ears; one horn had evidently been struck at some distant period and broken, and the mark of another wound was apparent on his side. George Bankes provided us one afternoon with a large supply of guinea-fowl, which abound in this part of the country.

One of our dogs, "Uptell," was such a fine-charactered beast that he deserves mention; not only on account of his noble disposition, but also for the varied life of adventure through which he had passed. Picked up on the veldt by his master as a waif and stray, he was given the name "Uptell," which means simply "flotsam." He had since been caught in a trap, run over by a waggon, carried off by a lion the marks of whose teeth yet remained on his skin, stuck by a hartebeest, suffered the loss of an eye and a

tooth ; and was yet as game as ever. He would never stir from his master's side until his shot had been fired ; when, if there was a drop of blood on the spoor, he would not leave it until he lay down at last beside the dead animal, and remained there guarding it until the arrival of his master. On one occasion, I remember, Bankes was sitting under the wagon, and, seeing a strange Kaffir passing, asked him to bring his coat, which was lying on the ground at some little distance. The Kaffir had just stooped to lift the coat, when Uptell pinned him. He had seen a stranger touching the property of his party, and made sure of him at once, possibly thinking that he could apologise afterwards if it should turn out he was in error. Dear old dog, he meant well ; but the Kaffir hardly saw it in the same light, and turned almost white with fear. We had often heard of the remedy "a hair of the dog that bit you," but had never

seen it applied so literally as in this case, when, after we had disentangled Uptell and the Kaffir, our cook, a coloured boy, promptly

OUR DOGS.

plucked some hairs from the tail of the offending animal, and having burnt them, proceeded to apply the ashes to the wound, after which he informed us that evil consequences could not

possibly ensue. Truly, there is nothing like faith!

It was at Riet-fontein that we feared old Uptell had met his fate. One of us had wounded a sable antelope (*Hippotragus Niger*), and the dog ran in at him before a second shot could be delivered. Down went the long, curved horns, and Uptell was hurled to a considerable distance. Nothing daunted, he returned with renewed vigour, but the beast, which had received a second bullet and was by this time dying, retained sufficient strength to make a sharp turn with its head backwards, driving one horn right through the plucky dog's chest. He never uttered a sound, but stuck to the buck's throat until satisfied it was dead.

It was difficult which to admire the most; the buck, determined to die game and if possible to slay his enemy before he died, or the dog that would not fail in his duty to his master. We

feared he would never recover, but could not find it in our hearts to shoot him. So we had him brought back to camp, placing him tenderly on an extemporised bed of grass in the body of the buck ; and although much swollen and in great pain, we doctored him, and syringed his deep wounds with Condy's Fluid, and tried to make him lie under the wagon. But he preferred to retire to some long grass a short way off, which was most unsatisfactory, as we had heard lions about during the previous night. However, by resting a few days to give him a chance, and then by carrying him on the wagon, he ultimately recovered, and caught many bucks in addition to the aforesaid Kaffir, before we finally bade him good-bye, on the Bubyé River, some two months later.

After crossing the Wanetzé River, about forty miles farther east, we formed a camp at some "Malala loops," where we met an Englishman

returning who had had two of his donkeys killed by a lion. It was satisfactory to know that he had killed the lion; but it is an interesting question, and open to argument, as to "whether one lion is worth two donkeys?" It was somewhat remarkable that we should have chanced across this gentleman, as we were the only white men within a radius of a hundred miles, and half an hour either way would have caused us to miss each other. In case these lines should meet his eye, we take the opportunity of informing him that we did not see the buffalo herd at the outspan near Wanetzé River, of which he spoke. We could have wished him to have been with us, and often hoped he was having good sport.

CHAPTER V

In the "Fly"—The Malala Loops—Rangana's Randt—The River Lundi—Push on to Maguati's Kraal—Native Beer—In pursuit of Sea-cows—Scene at cutting up the Hippos—Sea-cow cheek—Return to Maguati's Kraal, and thence to the Lundi—News from Victoria—More Sea-cows—On the Tokwé—Bush-fire.

AT the Malala Loops we formed our camp; and as we were now on the verge of the country technically termed "the Fly" (on account of its being infested with the dreaded tse-tse, whose bite, though it is harmless to human beings, is fatal to horses and cattle), we started on foot across what we called "Rangana's Randt," a range of hills running east and west, to the Lundi and Umtelique rivers, in order to shoot "sea-cows," or hippopotami. The length of our *cortège* of carriers, eager for a big feed

of sea-cow's flesh, reminded me of travelling on the West Coast—"the white man's grave."

Rangana's Randt consists of huge granite

NEAR LUNDI RIVER.

boulders loosely thrown together in the most fantastic style. Hidden away amidst these enormous blocks of stone, the Kaffir hopes to dwell in safety in the little hut he there erects. Trees

and plants, beautiful and curious, flourish in every sheltered nook and crevice; butterflies of wondrous and varied hues flit about among the blossoms, which are almost as bright as the butterflies' wings; while long, feathery grey lichens, trailing from many of the trees, add a weird look to the surroundings. This sort of scenery did not last long, for once more on the level beyond the hills the monotonous "turpentine bush" began again.

At the point where we crossed, the Lundi was very low, and its rocky bed unpleasantly sore to bare feet. In consequence of the smallness of the stream, and not hearing of the neighbourhood of any sea-cows, we determined to push on to the Umtelique at Maguati's kraal. This chief, hearing of our approach, turned out his followers in full war-paint and feathers, and armed to the teeth, in readiness to repel the white intruders into his domain. Piet, however,

happened to be an old friend of Maguati, and as soon as he was known to be of our party, and had advanced with explanations of our eminently

TWO OF MAGUATI'S MEN.

friendly mission, the looks of anger and gestures of defiance were changed to greetings and welcomes; and the women, who had been securely concealed, were recalled, and produced large

calabashes of beer for our refreshment. This beer is made from the seeds of the Marula plant, and is a thickish liquor of a dirty-white hue. It has a slightly sour taste, resembling that of Irish buttermilk. It is, of course, intoxicating. "Dinner and Drink," "'Baccy and Beer," "Peace and Presents," were the orders issued; everything being subservient to, and tending towards the augmentation of, the latter, *viz.*, "Presents."

Two days of palavering, talking, and exchanging of presents elapsed before the chief's leave was obtained, and we were able to proceed in search of the hippos. In the interval he had sent out to ascertain their whereabouts, and when the requisite information arrived, we marched forward up the river. Although we found fresh spoor, we did not see nor hear them for some days. Then, going early one morning to a pool in which they had been during the previous

night the unmistakable sound of blowing reached our ears. As I was the new hand, Bankes most generously permitted me to have the first shot, vowing direst vengeance and never-ceasing enmity if I missed. Creeping cautiously forward, I suddenly beheld what seemed a huge rock rise above the surface of the water and look carefully round. Having received most particular instructions to aim at, and hit, a spot midway between the ear and the eye, and not feeling satisfied that I could get a good shot from where I was, I allowed the animal to subside again. When he reappeared I gave him a bullet propelled by six drachms of powder from a ·577 by Tolley, of Conduit Street, which caused him to disappear more speedily than he had come up; and we concluded that he would not rise again.

I was feeling very well pleased and satisfied with myself, when we suddenly heard him blow some distance up the river, and, looking in the

direction from whence the sound proceeded, saw a bright red spout of water ascending into the air. My pride received a prompt and sudden

UMTELIQUE RIVER.

fall, for I knew that I had not held as steady as I should have done, and that my bullet had failed to reach the vital spot. Bankes got a shot at him as he was coming out of the river,

and rolled him over dead—half in the water and half on the bank.

A little later, while sitting at the edge of the pool, my boy Jack caught me by the sleeve, and dragging me to another spot, pointed to the surface of the water. I had neither seen nor heard anything; but presently a big head emerged, and drawing a bead on him, I knew when he sank he would not rise again until Nature caused the huge carcass to float several hours subsequently.

Our retinue had now assumed formidable proportions, and the opposite bank of the river was crowded with the inhabitants of that most rocky and picturesque side, who hurled invectives at our followers, and showered abuse upon them for having permitted white men to come and kill the sea-cows. Matters drew to such a head that arrows were fitted to bowstrings, guns cocked, and assegais handled so menacingly

that bloodshed seemed bound to follow. However, there is generally more talk than action in these people, and having been assured that there was enough for both factions, they sat down quietly on their respective banks, to await the morrow; when, having fitted together the small Berthon boat which we had brought with us, the two unwieldy carcasses were towed singly to a shelving, rocky place, where the work of skinning them was commenced. The little Berthon proved most useful for conveying the large slabs of hide and the "bacon" to a more convenient landing-stage lower down the stream. This proved no slight task, and we had great difficulty during the operation to restrain the greedy savages from cutting up our animals before we had ourselves finished with them.

This having been finally accomplished, word was given to the natives, and as if by magic the scene was changed into one almost diabolic

in character. Imagine, if possible, a swarming mass of naked black savages, splashing in and out of the water—which had now assumed the

SEA-COW'S HEAD.

semblance of a sea of blood—shouting, fighting, and frantically waving reeking knives, axes, assegais, and lumps of raw flesh ; while some were actually inside the carcasses of the sea-cows,

hewing, tearing, and hacking off pieces, which they flung to their friends on shore rather than relinquish their positions of advantage on the fast disappearing prey. In less than half an hour, there remained but the backbones—to which scarcely enough flesh adhered for the satisfaction of a single hungry dog—and the heads, which we had to guard most zealously, or they would have been likewise destroyed.

The cutting of the "shamboks" or slices of hide to be dried, preparatory to making them into whips, was a tedious job, but Piet, who was accustomed to it, performed this duty in such an excellent manner that we thought it would be a pity to interfere ; and as the rest of the herd had evidently cleared off down stream, we devoted our time and attention to the shooting of a few bucks, and the eating of sea-cow cheek, baked in the earth, which makes a sumptuous repast for a hungry man.

There being no particular object in remaining here, we loaded the rest of our carriers with the "shamboks," and returned to Maguati's kraal, *en route* for the Tokwé River, where we expected to find more sea-cows. The natives cut the meat into zigzag strips for binding on sticks, as being easier of transport. I noticed that they would carry fully twice as heavy a load of meat for their own use as they would of "shamboks," when paid to do so for us. The renowned sea-cow "bacon," so highly prized by the Dutchmen, and of which we had heard so much, is without doubt very acceptable as food—chiefly, it would seem, as affording a change from buck-meat, which is very dry. When toasted on a forked stick over a fire of mahogany-wood, and eaten with Kaffir-corn "pap," it is by no means despicable, especially to the taste of a hungry man who has spent the day tramping under a broiling sun.

At Maguati's kraal we received a great ovation, the hearts of the natives being opened towards us on account of our prowess in slaying the mighty Behemoth and providing meat for these people for some time to come. They marked their sense of pleasure and esteem by presenting us with a goat, for which they expected, and were not disappointed in receiving, an equivalent present of cloth and beads. But they evidently feared that the attractions of the young lady, whose hair was covered with little lumps of red clay and fat, would prove too much for our susceptibilities, so they had carefully hidden her away in the bush, during our absence.

Maguati is a big chief among his own people, but he informed us that he had to pay an annual tax to Gungunhana. He and his people seem to live in mortal dread of the Matabeles, and it was while with him that we heard the first rumours of the raid upon Fort Victoria; but we

fully believed the stories were vastly exaggerated, and it was not until later on that we learnt how true was their version of the incident.

KAFFIR BELLES.

It was a long tramp from this place to the spot on the Lundi River where we encamped,

some twenty miles farther up than where we had previously crossed. The river here flows over wide, flat rocks, and we heard of the presence of some sea-cows higher up ; but, although we saw fresh spoor, we failed to come across the animals themselves. A native, however, told us of some in a large pool at the junction of the Tokwé and the Lundi, and offered to guide us to the spot where they might be found. Consequently we followed him, pushing our way through tall, strong reeds and bushes to a large, open pool. Seeing no signs of their whereabouts, we went on, and presently heard them on shore, immediately in front of us. The bushes and reeds were violently smashed a little to our right, and an old sea-cow was seen to emerge into the open, hastening across the sand towards the water. A single shot dropped her in her tracks ; and a smaller hippo, following immediately behind, made frantic endeavours to reach the water. It

ran thus for nearly a hundred yards, presenting a ludicrous, unwieldy appearance, with its big head moving from side to side, and cramming on all the steam possible, before any one could get a shot at it. We fired twice, without apparent effect; but a bullet which struck it as it reached the water, achieved the desired object.

While the process of skinning the first victim was in progress, George Bankes took the boat all round the pool in the hope of discovering the third hippo, which we knew must be hiding in the immediate vicinity. The boat moved slowly and cautiously, my friend keeping an anxious outlook, but without result, until, at the head of the pool, the boat entered a narrow channel, leading to a small backwater, when, before he had observed it, the huge animal rolled off the bank into the water alongside his frail craft, causing her, very fortunately, to be lifted up on to the reeds by the action of the water it dis-

placed. Bankes fired as the sea-cow splashed through the shallow water. But a bullet in the hind-quarters of this animal does little to impede

DEAD SEA-COW.

its action. As soon as the boat floated again with the subsidence of the wave, the hippo, finding it impossible to escape over the rocks, turned and made for the boat; and the way

being narrow and giving it no chance of passing them, its occupants only just managed, by seizing the reeds, to pull themselves out of its road. It brushed by, and received another shot in the head. Meanwhile, hearing the noise I ran up, and appearing over a small sand-dune was confronted by the enormous mouth of the brute, who was roaring lustily and streaming with blood. Which was the more astonished I hardly know; but the hippo turned back again, splashing his way down the narrow channel. I dared not fire, as I could not ascertain the whereabouts of the boat. There was little doubt that the animal was badly hit when he finally got into the pool, where he kept moving about and only occasionally showing his nose above for a second or two. Darkness setting in, we had to abandon the search; and although for two days we followed his spoor and the pools of blood which were plainly visible at the spot where he had

been obliged to leave the water without recovering his body, nothing will ever convince me that he was not killed, or that the natives did not know where the carcass was, and only awaited our departure to secure him for themselves. Piet expressed his opinion that he was quite the biggest sea-cow he had ever seen—and he has made the chase of this animal the business of his life. At any rate, we were much mortified to lose him after all the excitement ; but sport as well as life has its trials and disappointments, which must be borne as well and cheerfully as may be.

While on the Tokwé we had a narrow escape of being burnt out by a bush-fire which we saw, by the direction of the wind, to be fast approaching us. We hastily burnt a broad ring of grass round the little camp—removing our guns and ammunition to a safe spot some distance off, on the sand. Then we sat down to watch. Onward rushed the advancing flames, licking up the dry

grass, and sending clouds of sparks high into the air, while a black and barren waste denoted the track of the devastating element. Before it flew a host of small birds, ruthlessly driven from their nests, dazed with the heat, and frightened by the crackling of the tall reeds as the flames sped along amongst them, and the noise of burning and falling timber, while at a great height hovered many hawks, and other birds of prey, bent on making their opportunity in the necessity of their smaller kindred. Onward came the flames, sweeping right over our little camp; but the magic ring of burnt-grass saved us, and no real damage was done. We particularly congratulated ourselves on not losing our "shamboks," which had been placed in the trees to dry, and fortunately escaped with but a slight scorching.

Frequently for days at a time we would have to travel through country all black and burnt

up by these bush-fires. The veldt is often set on fire purposely by quagga hunters, who can thus more easily hunt down and capture

YOUNG QUAGGA.

these beautiful little striped animals, which will doubtlessly some day be of considerable value to mankind, for they are unaffected by the bite of the tse-tse fly. At the present time, Mr.

Zeederberg, who "runs" the Mail Service in Mashonaland and the Transvaal, has used them with great effect. They are captured either by shooting the mother, or by chasing them on a fast horse and slipping a noose of hide over their heads. Some men will gallop after a little quagga and seize him by the tail, and hold him thus till their companions come with assistance. I met one party on the Bubyé River who had captured forty of these little animals.

The tenacity of life, and toughness generally, of the fragile-looking little rooiboks (*Æpyceros Melampus*) struck me very forcibly. There were many herds of these graceful creatures hereabouts, and it was marvellous the manner in which they would get away, suffering from wounds which one would have considered quite sufficient to prevent any animal from moving. I recollect one case where I had broken the hind leg of a rooibok, and was anxious to

recover him; so, instead of following up the rest of the troop, I started off in pursuit of the wounded one. He led me a dance of a mile or more before I secured him, and then not until four bullets had passed through his body. Many people will say that this was bad shooting. Granted: I do not profess to be a crack shot; and I daresay that is one of the reasons why it was always greater satisfaction to me to recover a wounded animal than to follow on after the herd, and *try* and kill another, when perhaps it would again in its turn be but merely wounded by my indifferent shooting.

CHAPTER VI

The Sick Carrier—Bad news from Victoria—We return to the Camp at the Malala Loops—Carriers—Ostriches—Hendrik Voster—I catch a little Wart-hog—We shoot two Lions—Retrace our steps towards Rietfontein—At the Junction of the Bubyé and Bubyané—Bankes has a narrow escape—Killing a Snake—Mount Domba Saba—Klip-springers—Our bag—Bankes goes to the Low Country.

WE were now going to retrace our footsteps, and get back again to our horses; for, after all was said and done, we came to the conclusion that sea-cow shooting was *not* very exciting sport; when once the sea-cows are "located"—as our friends across the herring-pond would say—it is merely a question of holding straight. The object you fire at is not galloping hard past, or away from you; there it is, steady in

front of you for half a minute or so, and then it will rise again, in almost the very same spot, if the hunter has been careful not to show himself, nor make a noise to disturb it. The way the enormous heads went up and down reminded me of the regulation "disappearing targets." Then, again, it is highly unsatisfactory not to know the result of a shot for many hours afterwards. These beasts sink, and if struck in a vital spot in the brain, will not rise until the gases in their body cause the huge carcass to rise to the surface and float, head downwards. No; there is more sport to be got in shooting a little buck than a ponderous sea-cow.

One of the carriers whom we had left at the spot where we had struck the Lundi for the second time on account of his entertaining an inward conviction that his dissolution was about to take place in a few hours, was, we were more than a little pleased to find, completely restored

to perfect health again; although he informed us that he was still "too weak to carry a load." The cure was effected by three extra-double large doses of "Livingstone Rousers," and about fifty drops of chlorodyne from us, assisted on his own part by many large calabashes of native beer, and, judging by the appearance of his load of "bacon," more than one half of his original load of that luxury!

We had provided ourselves with a small medicine-chest, which Messrs. Burroughs and Welcome had filled with a few of the most necessary medicines for fever, or any ordinary ailment, done up in that most handy form for transport, *viz.*, tabloids. It is a matter for which we cannot be too thankful that we had very little use for them for our own selves; but "our boys," and the Kaffirs generally, used to come to us from long distances in order to avail themselves of the "white man's medicine." It

didn't matter the complaint, it was all alike, as long as they got some of the white man's medicine—it was certain to cure them.

A CARRIER.

The trials and difficulties we endured in reorganising our small caravan of carriers will be a lesson to me for "future guidance." These men are the laziest I have ever come across, for

they grumble at carrying a load of twenty pounds —when they are paid to carry sixty pounds—and yet they will think nothing of shouldering eighty pounds of meat for their own consumption, for which they are *not* paid. Let it, however, be understood that they are not all bad; among our lot I found several whom I would gladly take with me anywhere—able, willing, and cheery fellows, who never complained. One boy particularly interested me by the dogged fashion in which he struggled along under a full-grown man's load, never complaining and never accepting help. He informed me he wanted to make some money so as to get a wife! So much for love among our dark-skinned brethren.

When we were re-crossing Rangana's Randt we halted at a village among the rocks, where we obtained water from a hole in a flat rock, worn smooth by the constant succession of generations of barefooted women and children

ever and anon going to draw water. I have tasted all sorts of dishes and liquids which out of courtesy we have called "water," but never

CARRIERS AND DRIVERS.

before was it my misfortune to taste any beverage such as this which was proffered me by a really comely and prepossessing maiden; and but that our native gallantry was such that we could not

hurt a lady's feelings, we were very nearly being sea-sick on the spot. How is it that these people escape typhoid fever? The huts are built *above* the water, and all the drainage of the village flows down and is collected in the well. This cup of cold water offered to me was meant as kindness and friendship, and I took it as such; but to this day I wish that young lady had not been so polite.

While eating a hasty meal among the rocks, surrounded by gaping men, women, and children, we heard once more blood-curdling stories of the cruelties of the Matabeles, and the full particulars of the late raid upon Victoria; one man, who had an arm swathed in filthy rags, assuring us that the Matabeles had cut his hand off, and that he with several others had managed to escape from Victoria, but that if we ever arrived there, we should not find a single white man alive.

It was hard to credit all these statements; and

yet every time we heard the story, from different sources each time, it was exactly the same, and so we were forced to believe it, and made up our

FRED.

minds to dally no longer, but get to Victoria and hear the real truth for ourselves as soon as we could.

On returning to our camp at the Malala

Loops, I found that Bankes—who had gone forward the previous day with Fred, the cook—had shot several elands, and caught three small sable antelopes and a little steenbok. Two of them died, but very soon we succeeded in catching another, and it did not take very long before "Billy" and "Jack," as we named them, grew quite tame and friendly, wandering about with the oxen and coming home with them at even, and submitting with great condescension to be carried in the wagon when we were "on the trek." When halted for the night we would gather fresh grass, which they would readily eat from our hands. What joy our return gave the dogs! With me one of the greatest pleasures of absence, lies in anticipating the hearty welcome which I know my dogs will give me on my return. I always look forward to it with the greatest—an almost childish—delight. No man has such a good friend as his dog.

Settling up with the carriers was a wearisome business, not only on account of the expenditure of temper and language, but also it was such a waste of time, the chief maxim of these men being "Never be satisfied." They reminded me extremely of the Irish beggar who, when he was rebuked for not doing some useful work, pleaded, "Shure, an' there's no harrum in the axin'!"

It was very pleasant to feel oneself once more on horseback, although shooting bucks on foot, which is the only practicable method in the "Fly" country, is good sport. There is, of course, but little of the "stalking" excitement, for the bush is so thick that it appeared to me that there was a sort of haphazard about seeing the animals; but the knowledge that if the first shot misses its aim there will be no chance of a second, makes one more careful to "hold straight" than when there is the chance of

overtaking the troop again on one's horse. At one time, when I had missed several easy shots on several consecutive days, in a most unaccountable way, my boy, Jack, affirmed that it was utterly useless for me to go out any more; "for," said he, "one of the men has doctored you with witchcraft." He was thoroughly convinced that I might as well remain in camp, and great was his joy when, on the following day, I shot a koodoo. He expressed his conviction that now "the curse was removed."

One morning, I was out with a young Dutchman, named Voster, whose wagon we had engaged, when we came across half a dozen ostriches. Very strange they looked going through the long grass, above which only their lengthy necks were visible. They went off at a tremendous pace; and seeing feathers denied us for that day, we made a large circle, and, returning towards the camp, met a family of wart-

hogs (*Phacochœrus Æthiopicus*). We rode them down, and I succeeded in prostrating myself on a little one, who, not relishing a living weight of some hundred and seventy pounds, struggled, squeaked, and bit, as only a pig can. Notwithstanding many protests on the part of this diminutive "porker" against the indignity of such a proceeding, we succeeded in tying the little squeaker on to the back of my saddle, in a position which we trusted would prove as little irksome to him as possible, considering that he was unaccustomed to riding on horseback. He evinced a decided propensity for tasting that part of my person which was nearest to him; and as even a little pig's teeth are sharp, it became necessary to muzzle him. His struggles, however, soon told on the lashings of his legs, and with a grunt he slipped off and hung suspended by his two hinder ones. Voster next undertook to carry him in his arms, with all his

legs tied together in a bunch. For several miles we progressed merrily enough, until Voster suddenly noticed that he was getting covered with the small parasites with which the wart-hog is infested. So the pig was transferred to an old sack which had been folded underneath one of the saddles, and we finally brought him safely into camp.

We were unable to persuade our captive to feel, "at home;" so, as he always resented any overtures towards friendship, and was evidently fretting for his family and friends, we released him one fine morning, and he was not long in disappearing. Funny, ugly little beast—no one could help laughing at him. Perhaps we hurt his feelings more than his body.

On the day during which Voster and myself had caught the little pig, Bankes and the others had been out and shot seven sable antelopes (*Hippotragus Niger*). We went on the following

morning with a wagon to bring them in, and we rode on ahead, in order to see if some additional bucks had come to water. I was riding

LIONS.

with Alfred, and he pointed out to me where they had covered up the first one on the previous evening, and said something which I did not catch, instantly turning his horse in the same

direction. Following his glance, I saw two animals which, as they got up and looked round, appeared to me in the grey light of the morning like enormous sheep. I looked hard, and was vexed with myself for not recognising what they were. Then it suddenly dawned on me—'Lions!"—and they began to retreat slowly, we following. They broke into a loose, slinging sort of trot, as much as to say, "We sha'n't excite ourselves in order to get out of *your* way." We commenced to canter. They increased their pace. The country was quite open, and we galloped; thus we continued gradually gaining upon them as the light got stronger, till nearing them I dismounted and fired at one of them, but—oh, horror! Shall I ever forget my feelings of disappointment?—failed to stop him! whereupon they both quickened their pace. My horse, growing restive, would not let me fire again, and eventually smashed the thong attached

to my belt and bolted away towards home; so as Alfred was galloping hard after them, I had to make the best of my way on foot. I heard a couple of shots, and saw one of the lions crossing at right angles to me and going towards the left. My second barrel dropped him, and I polished him off with another. By the time I got up, Alfred had wounded his companion, and we heard him growling savagely under a tree. I could not see him at first, but going towards him, Alfred, who, being mounted, could see over me, shouted that he was "going to charge!" I caught sight of his head and fired, when I beheld one of the most magnificent sights I have ever witnessed, and wished I had brought my Kodak, for he stood up, as it seemed to me, on his hind legs, frantically waving his paws in the air, and roaring grandly. This he did three times without advancing; so another shot put a termination to the performance. It was about as splendid and

magnificent a sight as one can imagine, to see him waving his paws in the air, with his mouth wide open, and dripping blood, giving vent to roars of mingled pain and rage. Yea, indeed, then did he look a King of Beasts—but not so when the nearest part of him to us was his tail. I would have given anything to have had the Kodak with me. But, as usual, I expect the Kodak would have been forgotten in the excitement of the moment.

We were, however, satisfied to have two dead lions within two hundred yards of each other; and on examination we found that my first shot had grazed the shoulder of the first lion, but without doing sufficient damage to stop him. They were both fine males; but one had lost the tuft from his tail, and the other was a bit damaged about the mouth, owing to one of our shots having struck his jaw. They had evidently been gorging themselves on one of our dead

bucks, and so were unable or unwilling to defend their position; which gave us a less high opinion of their courage than they perhaps deserved.

A MORNING'S BAG.

That morning we brought into camp eight bucks and two lions, and in the afternoon an additional brace of bucks, which made up a satisfactory day's bag.

We now commenced to retrace our steps along the Wanetzé river to Riet-fontein, being unable to find a rhinoceros which was supposed to be in the neighbourhood, and in hunting for which we had lost many days; for it was unnecessary for us to shoot any more bucks until we had converted those we had already shot into 'biltong.' There were plenty of lions, but we could not succeed in getting near them; also abundance of game of various kinds, more especially troops of the beautiful 'rooiboks,' a small antelope with singularly graceful horns, but one which it takes a lot of lead to kill. While chasing a fine koodoo bull, who had apparently deserted his harem, and was wandering about by himself, I got a nasty thorn into my knee, which caused me considerable pain, and rendered me lame for several days. Alfred also had a bad fall, through his horse swerving on one occasion, whilst trying to catch a young quagga,

and throwing him against a tree. We applied zinc ointment and lint to the abrasions, and a rest of a few days soon helped to bring him round again. We succeeded in capturing a little quagga later on; but just as he was beginning to get tame, he broke his neck one night while tied to a tree. We concluded that he must have made a sudden plunge, frightened by a lion which was roaring close to the camp. At any rate, we found him dead in the morning.

We set traps for the lions every night, but they were too wary to enter them. However, we caught two "wolves," beastly, ugly-looking brutes, one of which bore evidences of having been previously shot, in the loss of an eye and a portion of his upper jaw—which did not add to the beauty of his appearance. Altogether we did not find our traps a great success.

At Riet-fontein, while following eland's spoor, we witnessed one of the prettiest sights that

I saw during the whole expedition, namely, a troop of six koodoo bulls, standing not thirty yards away, and staring attentively at us. As we had previously decided to shoot only elands that day, we did not disturb them, and they trotted calmly on to a little farther distance, from whence they took another survey of our party. Although my fingers were itching to make me the possessor of a certain pair of those horns, we may consider that the loss of the coveted horns was amply made up by the pleasure of the sight of so many handsome animals. Probably if we had wished to kill them we should have had some difficulty in finding them. We found no elands that day at all, as it happened; but Bankes had a very nasty fall in riding after a giraffe, or "kameel," as the Boers would call it.

Two days later we fell in with our elands, and shot a few; a magnificent bull falling to my

gun. The cutting up of these beasts took a considerable time, and we had to amuse ourselves by shooting birds, so as to avoid overstocking the larder. Guinea-fowl being plentiful, we used a little ·360 rook rifle upon them, and made good practice with it. A pie made of these birds is by no means to be despised.

At the Bubyé River we encountered several days of hard rain, and the ground in consequence became too heavy for much riding. Bankes had a narrow escape once, when a roan antelope (*Hippotragus Leucophæus*) that he had wounded and was following, charged from behind a bush where it was concealed, and managed to touch his horse before he could fire again and drop it. The plucky animal, being unable to distinguish which of the two was the aggressor, had boldly made for the bigger. At any rate, and at the risk of being ridiculed, this is what I choose to believe. Why should we not credit

the inferior creation with some of the attributes which we are proud to possess ourselves?

Had it not been for the promptitude of Jim,

"BILLY" AND "JACK."

the driver, who raised the alarm, we might have been at the loss of one of our oxen by a lion one evening; but Mr. Leo thought better of it when he saw us "doubling up'

with our guns, and disappeared into the long grass.

Poor little "Billy," the "Swart-wit-pens-bok" (black buck with the white belly, or sable antelope), died on the Bubyé River, and we all missed our little companion, which had become perfectly tame and friendly.

Being informed one day by the boys that they had seen a large snake, we went to the spot indicated, and after dragging it out of an ant-bear hole by the tail, put a bullet through its head. It was a matter of considerable difficulty to get it to the wagons, it being a far from simple matter to transport a boa measuring nearly fourteen feet. By dint of much persuasion we managed to hoist it on to the saddle in the shape of a coil, and there to fasten it securely. But even a dead snake is liable to work itself loose, and this one did so several times. Finally, on approaching the camp, it broke loose entirely, and afforded

the funniest spectacle; the pony careering madly among the other horses and oxen, with the snake hanging from its saddle and coiling and twisting itself with every movement of the frightened animal, set off the other horses and cattle plunging wildly over the veldt in every direction. Wit-foot flew around literally, for more than half the time he was off the ground, jumping, plunging, and kicking, till finally he divested himself of every stitch of saddling, and stood there, dripping with sweat, and quivering with fright. Nor were the boys themselves any less alarmed. There was but one among them who would go near the "slang," as they called it. Our laughter at the sight very nearly killed us.

At the junction of the Bubyé and Bubyané Rivers we heard from some white transport riders terrible accounts of the Matabele raids in the vicinity of Victoria; so as we were well enough situated at the time, we decided to wait where

we were before going on to Zimbabye, the famous ruins, which I was anxious to view ere I left the country. We decided to part company here, I going north to see Zimbabye, while Bankes went south to the Lataba River to fish; and if time allowed of it, I was to meet him in Zoutpansberg, preparatory to our starting home. Bankes went up to Victoria to sell the horses, bring back our letters, which we were anxious to get after five months without news, and to find out the true state of affairs in Victoria, while I was to remain with the wagons, square up, and get all ready for his return. While doing so, going out one morning between the rivers, I wounded a koodoo, and dismounted in order the more easily to follow the "blood-spoor." I followed it for a long while, expecting every moment to find him dead, but after a while I lost it, and could not again take it up. Being by myself, I turned round, intending to pick up my companion's spoor and

go on. While riding after him, I came across my own and the koodoo's spoors, and, to my surprise, those of three lions in addition. I at once started in pursuit, but the lions' spoor suddenly disappeared. These gentlemen, having evidently discovered that they were being hunted, instead of hunting, had consequently dodged into the bush. I thought it grossly impertinent of these brutes to follow a man's spoor within half an hour of his having left it.

At Mount Domba Saba, near the southern side of which we had formed our camp, I was elated at my success in bagging a couple of klip-springers *(Oreotragus Saltator)*, odd-looking little bucks with very strange hair. One of them gave me more pleasure and satisfaction in his shooting than many of the much larger kinds that frequently fell to my gun. I espied him standing up among the rocks, from which he derives his name, and fired. I felt sure that I

had hit him, but he dodged over the edge of a ravine, and I lost sight of him while toiling up myself. I searched for that buck for many hours, but without effect; I went home and got a horse, and rode out in the afternoon, and sought diligently till dark, but returned empty. Next day I got a couple of Kaffirs, and began searching up and down every ravine on that sugar-loaf mountain. I was afraid I should never find him, and was on the point of relinquishing the search, when, as luck would have it, I lighted upon his carcass, which had been eaten by some animals, the head alone remaining untouched. He had travelled up and down three or four ravines, and was lying in a small dry watercourse, half hidden by a bush. It gives rise to a feeling of the greatest satisfaction to recover a wounded buck after a diligent search. The worst feature of South African shooting is the difficulty of retrieving a wounded animal

unless the hunter is proficient in the art of "spooring," which proficiency it is impossible to acquire in one season. The only consolation to be had in losing a wounded buck comes with the knowledge that it will fall a prey to the errant lion, who would otherwise be forced to kill whole, healthy animals for the appeasement of his hunger.

Bankes fully confirmed the disquieting rumours we had heard of the Matabeles from Kaffirs and transport riders. He also brought me down a warrant to arrest about a dozen or so Dutchmen, whom we heard had been killing elephants, sea-cows, etc., without licences. Unfortunately, it was too late, for these men had trekked across the Crocodile River just a few days prior to my receipt of the warrant; they had sent Kaffirs across the river with all their ostrich feathers long before they and their wagons arrived at the drift. I am sorry we did not catch these men,

for they had slain the elephants which we should have found.

The day before I parted from Bankes, he shot a giraffe. I was sorry not to have succeeded in adding to my bag a giraffe, an ostrich, and a rhinoceros.

We counted our bag before Bankes left for the Letaba River to fish, and I started for Zimbabye. We trusted we should meet again at Cape Town, if not sooner, and return to England together; but as events proved we were not destined to fulfil this plan, it having been ordained that I should continue for some time longer the wagon-life of which I had grown so enamoured, and ultimately enter Bulawayo.

Our bag, up to September 5th, included 15 steenboks, 7 duykers, 1 wildebeest, 12 koodoo, 5 water-bucks, 1 springbok, 26 sable antelopes, 3 roan antelopes, 7 wart-hogs, 18 elands, 4 buffaloes, 4 hippopotami, 7 rooiboks, 2 klip-springers,

2 grysboks, 2 reedbucks, 2 lions, 1 "tiger," 3 "wolves," 2 jackals, 6 quaggas, 2 hartebeests, 1 giraffe or "camel," and 1 crocodile; making

OUR PARTY.

a grand total of a hundred and thirty-four head of big game: besides birds, hares, and fish. Of course we could have easily brought our total up to two hundred; but we have the satisfaction of

knowing that we never wantonly killed an animal except as a specimen, or to serve as food. And although I doubtless fired many more shots without satisfactory results than I should have wished, nevertheless I spent the best months of my life out there, and shall always look back with pleasure to the days when George Bankes and I lived in the wagon in Mashonaland, hunting bucks. I would give a few years of my life, were that possible, to enjoy such another pleasant trip with him as my companion. And, moreover, my health, which had not been improved by a sojourn of eighteen months on the African West Coast, was now completely restored.

My hunting days were now practically ended; and I may say, before entering on the more serious portion of my story, that I did all my shooting with a double-barrelled ·577 Express rifle by Tolley, of Conduit-street, with which I shot everything, from a guinea-fowl up to a sea-

cow and a lion. I was highly pleased with it; for hunting on foot it cannot be beaten, but it is a trifle heavy for quick handling when mounted. For this description of work I regretted not having brought out a ·450 Metford-Gibbs, similar to that wherewith Mr. Selous seems to have done most of his fine shooting. Almost all Dutchmen, and most of the colonists, use Martini-Henry rifles cut down. "M. H." cartridges can always be procured in the country.

This little narrative would be incomplete without some mention of old Piet Duploy—"Oom Piet," as we used to call him. He was a remarkably handy man, and there seemed to be nothing, from making boots, or "veldt-schoon," to cutting and preparing "shamboks," and mending a wagon, that he could not do. He would undoubtedly have proved himself a good shot had we given him the chance; but when engaging him, we had expressly stipulated that whichever of us hap-

pened to be with him on an expedition should have the first shot, and he stuck staunchly to the bargain. He was an excellent hunter, and was conversant with all the numerous Kaffir dialects which flourished in the district. Poor old Piet! His heart was in the right place, and if everybody had as much of the milk of human kindness in him as he, the world would be a much pleasanter place to dwell in. I hope he found his wife and the two small children he had adopted well and safe upon his return. I should like to meet him again, and enjoy another laugh over the chaff he took so kindly. But I wish he would explain to me why we failed to find that big sea-cow.

Another Dutchman I should be glad to re-encounter was young Hendrik Voster. I would give something to be able to jump on and off a horse as quickly as he can. He seemed to be a capital fellow, and a good man to hunt with, as

he ought to be, being the son of his father, a really fine specimen of a Boer gentleman, overflowing with hospitality, a keen sportsman, and a deadly shot. Young Hendrik—who was a very good shot himself—told me that his father taught him to shoot by sending him out as a lad, with a gun and a certain number of cartridges ; and upon his return home, if he failed to account for any single cartridge without a buck, the explanation was forthcoming on a certain tender portion of his person. No wonder he learnt to hold his gun straight.

George Bankes has gone out again with this young Dutchman, and as I sit here penning these feeble lines, my heart is all the time with *them* ; and if they only get one half the sport I wish them, they will be fairly satisfied with their wagons when they "come out of the Hunting-Veldt."

PART II

WAR

CHAPTER VII

Parting—I lose my Horse—The Austins—Wagon Accident—Silent Graves — Granite Kopjes — Baboons — Meet Dr. Jameson and Willoughby—Dakha-smoking—Hints to Sportsmen—Arrival at Victoria.

IT is a grave mistake to dally over parting, when all arrangements are complete. There can be no good gained by postponing the inevitable, and even a short hunting trip must presently come to an end. So, with a hearty handshake all round, I mounted my pony, and cantered across the veldt after my wagon, which had preceded me by several hours. We intended to strike the Victoria-Tuli road above Matebi's kraal, and, after "off-loading" at Victoria, to start for the ruins of the ancient gold-workers' town, Zimbabye.

We were outspanned, the oxen grazing peacefully, that afternoon, when the boy came and informed me that my pony, which had been turned loose for several hours to graze, was lost. We scoured the country all round, but unsuccessfully, until a Kaffir whom I accidentally met, stated that he had seen a horse answering to the description of mine at a white man's wagon a few miles distant.

This struck us as strange; but I knew that if he was in charge of a white man on the main road, there could be little difficulty in recovering him. So we inspanned at once, and trekked in the direction indicated by the Kaffir. During the night we came upon a wagon outspanned, and upon disturbing the sleepers found them to be a party of Englishmen, with their families, going to Gaza-land to farm. The man with whom they were travelling had abandoned them, declining to wait while Messrs. Austin and

Naylor's oxen—which were completely knocked up—recovered their strength. It turned out that they had observed a Kaffir driving my horse along, and had recognised it as belonging to our party, which they had passed on Bubyé River. As the Kaffir was unable to give a satisfactory account of how he had become possessed of the pony, they had detained it, and were sending down a message informing us that they had done so.

Finding what a bad plight their oxen were in, and moreover, having due regard to the disquieting stories of the Matabeles—who were at the time among the hills around—and as my own wagon was lightly loaded, I was able to relieve theirs of a considerable portion of its burden; and undertook to remain with them, and assist them to Victoria. They readily accepted my proffered aid, and on my part I found it very pleasant to have companions on my journey, and, moreover,

Mrs. Austin being a capital cook, they very kindly insisted on my joining them at meals, much to my own benefit.

THE AUSTIN FAMILY.

Many a pleasant hour I passed—while the oxen quietly grazed by the side of the road, and the boys slept in what small shade was obtainable under the wagon—playing with the children

—Birdie and Katie—and the dogs. Noticeable among the latter was a most extraordinary little puppy, who rejoiced in the name of "Bumbles," and, although but a few inches high, he was bold enough to have faced a lion. His poor little brother met a most sad and tragic fate, for he was missing one day, and on packing the wagon in the evening for another "trek," a tiny, flattened corpse was found under a box, which had been used for a seat! From that time forward I sat on the ground during meals.

At the Wanetzé River, where the banks are exceedingly steep, Mr. Austin's wagon took charge, and ran down of its own accord into the sand at the bottom; and there, after disentangling the oxen, we had to spend the best part of the night "off-loading" that wagon in order to put it to rights again, for the whole body of the wagon had jumped clean out and away from the bucks.

A large consignment of horses for the Chartered Company passed us here, being driven along on their way up from the Transvaal to Victoria. Some of them were good enough looking animals, but the majority of them were terribly worn, leg-weary and miserable, and we knew they would require a lot of rest and good feeding to get them fit. They had no time to feed while on the road.

The next night we started at sundown, and immediately before leaving the river I shot a nice otter, but was justly punished for the wanton destruction of life, by my pony, with the general appearance of which we were not satisfied during the day, though it was supposed to be "salted," and I had hoped to sell it well at Victoria, suddenly collapsing and dying, choked with horse-sickness. His bones will only add one more to the many scores of skeletons of horses and oxen which are to be met with all along the road.

On the banks of the Lundi river, and indeed, at frequent intervals along the road, may be noticed trees on which a rude cross has been cut. A heap of stones, upon which the remnants of the hastily knocked up litter with which his comrades bore him to his last resting-place, will be all that denotes the spot where some unfortunate traveller, weakened by want of sufficient and proper food, has eventually succumbed to fever. Some few may have a piece of biscuit-tin nailed on the tree, upon which the name of the man who died has been punched with the assistance of a nail; but in very many cases the man's name would be unknown.

These silent graves in the wilderness speak eloquently, and appeal to the feelings more deeply than the sermons of many renowned preachers at home; for it is impossible not to think sometimes on the "uncertainty of life," and the question of a hereafter, when in a country where

"time" is not so precious as in London, and one's path is beset with dangers and difficulties which are unforeseen, and frequently unavoidable.

Every store we came to we found deserted and empty—the owners having fled from the dreaded Matabeles—with the single exception of that on the Toque River, where we found Mr. Duncan (an old artilleryman), had "stuck to his guns;" and he very kindly gave us half a sheep, which he happened to have just killed, and for which we were unusually grateful, for on the main road game is scarce, and having now no pony I could not go very far in search of it.

I heard a lion feasting upon and enjoying himself with the carcass of a dead ox near the river; but owing to the darkness I could not see him, nor get a shot at him.

It would be superfluous for me to attempt—what other more able, practised, and graphic pens have done already—to give an adequate

description of the enormous kopjes, many of them several hundred feet high, consisting of one enormous solid block of granite, where troops of baboons sit up, and chatter and screech at the passers-by. One may occasionally see a "klipspringer" bounding away up to the rounded summit, while the deep channels worn in the solid rock by the intermittent rains of centuries testify to their age. To look on these huge, ponderous, solid masses of rock scattered about, makes one wonder how they ever managed to get where they are.

While crossing the Lundi River, we met the Victoria-Tuli mail going south, having among the passengers Major Sir John Willoughby and the Administrator, Dr. Jameson. The former I had not met since we parted at Haffeer, where the camp of the Heavy Camel Regiment was situated on the Nile in 1886. This was my first acquaintance with "the Doctor," whom I after-

wards learnt to admire for his marvellous power and tact. After delivering over the letters which had been entrusted to my care for him, we had

CROSSING A SLUIT.

a brief conversation, and I found him very cordial. He is not a big man, but possesses a pleasant appearance, and an attractive manner, especially when speaking.

The vicissitudes we encountered on the road, such as losing our oxen, and the delays incumbent on waiting to start until they were found; the necessity of re-arranging the teams when any one of them would die; running the wagons on to "stumps," through careless driving; sticking fast in "sluits" (which is the term given by the Dutchmen to dry watercourses), owing to the oxen being too weak to haul the wagon out, and having to hitch on the other team to assist them;—all these, of daily and nightly occurrence, besides many other minor trials, were too many and too trying to be recounted here.

"Jim," Mr. Austin's boy, a Zulu, was a capital fellow so long, but only so long, as he could obtain his "dakha," a kind of hemp, to smoke; but let him run out of this commodity and nothing on earth would induce him to do anything but run his wagon on to every stump he met—and they were not a few. The road was made by

cutting down and removing the trees in the thick bush, through which the Pioneer Column forced its way, only a couple of years previously.

It is exceedingly entertaining to watch these boys "dakha-smoking." A calabash of water is the first thing necessary, the next being a hollow reed. A small spot of earth is moistened with the water and a tunnel made with the finger, through which water is blown to make all clear. The dakha, in a dry, powdery condition, is then produced from a filthy piece of rag, which has been secreted on some part of the smoker's never over-scrupulously clean person, a pinch or two of the substance is put into the farthest hole, and a bit of glowing charcoal, or whatever substance is being used at the time for cooking purposes, is placed upon it. The smoker then lies down, and placing his big mouth over the hole, inhales a huge draught of the smoke through the little tunnel made of earth. He then takes a

drink of water and blows it and the smoke out through the reed, and immediately begins to shout and chatter incoherent nonsense at the top of his voice. This performance is repeated three or four times, and the smoke is over. The natives undoubtedly derive some very great pleasure from it, though personally I prefer to enjoy my tobacco without at the same time performing acrobatic feats on my head. I suppose it is merely a matter of taste and education.

During the journey up I spent a portion of my time in making a few notes from my experience, which I hoped might be of service to other men intending to make similar expeditions, and I will here set them down in an arbitrary and haphazard manner. The most important thing is the binding of all the "boys" and "hunters"—in fact, everybody whom the sportsman or traveller finds it necessary in any way to employ—by properly signed formal contracts,

drawn up in due legal form. Those who omit this formality are certain to be "done in the eye." Settlers and residents in the country invariably bind with a written contract every one whom they engage. It will be well for newcomers, who think perhaps when they are engaging "hunters" that they are dealing with sportsmen, with whom such a formality is unnecessary, to remember that these men are sportsmen in a secondary sense only, and that their primary object is the extraction of the greatest possible amount of money from the European.

Let him buy his wagons and oxen—not "hire" them; then he can sell what remains of them after his return. They are his own, and he may do what he likes with them. Again, the sportsman should always sell his "biltong." It is of considerable value, and the money it may realise will help to recoup unexpected losses. Having

paid his hunter for his services, there is absolutely no reason why he should further add to his remuneration by gifts of unlimited biltong.

If the sportsman should have made a contract to be taken into a district where the risk, from "fly," sickness, drought, etc., of losing oxen exists, and circumstances afterwards cause him to change his route for one wherein there is no such risk to life and property, he should infallibly make a new contract, at proportionately reduced rates. It is uncommonly useful to possess some knowledge of the Boer language; nor is it by any means a difficult tongue to acquire, being a fine mixture of bad German, bad English, and bad Kaffir. Finally, he should also exercise great care, in buying "guaranteed" horses, to ascertain that the man who acts as his agent for their purchase, and also the vendor of the animals, are both honourable and reliable men.

He will have to open his eyes pretty wide to discover them.

These are but a few hints to men going out, as

ON ROAD TO ZIMBABYE.

I did, for the first time, and may serve to enable them to buy that always expensive commodity, experience, in a cheaper market than freshcomers usually do.

We trekked through Providential Gorge (thus named by the Pioneer Column when they had passed through it in safety, without being attacked by the natives) and across the flat, open plains in the midst of which Fort Victoria is situated, and passing through the deserted Old Town and fort, we arrived at the strong but scattered-looking little town of red-brick houses roofed with tin, alternating with wattle-and-daub huts, roofed with grass. The tall tower of brick which forms so prominent a feature in the prospect is not the ubiquitous sign-manual of an active Town Council in this utilitarian century—a water tower. It is a "look-out," from whose summit the sentry stationed there may descry betimes the approach of the Matabeles bent on the destruction of Mashonas, or perhaps of the trees planted and tended with such care by Mr. Vigors, which will some day, let us hope, afford a refreshing shade, in which the rising genera-

tion of Victorians may more comfortably transact their affairs. Woe betide the creature—human or otherwise—who shall attempt to injure those little trees! On him will descend the wrath of the Mining Commissioner.

CHAPTER VIII

Description of Victoria—Ruins of Zimbabye—Theories—Gold workings—Death of a Prospector—Recalled to Victoria—The Matabeles and the Mashonas—Lobengula—The Raids—Captain Lendy and "the Doctor"—Panic in the District—The late Captain Lendy.

IT would not be very easy to lose oneself in Victoria. The streets are not so very intricate and complicated; one main street runs through it alongside the Fort, which consists of an oblong structure of red bricks, in which all the government offices, *e.g.*, telegraph, post-office, magistrates, etc., are situated. The entire length of the wall is loop-holed at a height of seven or eight feet from the ground, and an entanglement of barbed wire, about ten yards wide, surrounds the entire place. The

entrance can be barred by a pair of massive gates. It will thus be seen that a very few well-armed men, with a couple of machine guns, could easily hold it against overwhelming numbers of savages. The interior was crowded with the wagons of the settlers who had come in for protection.

All the men who were not already policemen had joined the Victoria Rangers, and were being drilled and equipped ready for any offensive or defensive measure which might be deemed advisable.

After bidding farewell to the companions of my journey from the Bubyé River, I set off with Messrs. "Matabele" Wilson—the future guide of the Victoria Column—and Jack Carruthers, with the accompanying little outfit of donkeys, for the famous Zimbabye ruins. It is needless to recount the incidents of the journey, during which we were drenched by

heavy and incessant rain, varied by big, hard-hitting hailstones. Suffice it to say that we arrived after dark, and were accommodated for

NORTH-EAST WALL OF TEMPLE, ZIMBABYE.

the remainder of the night by Mr. Hughes, a prospector, who had erected for himself a shelter to protect him from the elements.

The first ray of daylight showed us the huge

stone wall of the Temple, whose appearance recalled at once the scenes described in Mr. Rider Haggard's romances. It is a marvellous structure, erected without the aid of mortar, the square stones being placed one above another with evident care, but lacking that straightness of line and mathematical correctness of curve which mark more civilised architecture. I had seen the Egyptian Pyramids, and they had inspired me with awe, but, somehow, I was more impressed by the appearance of these ruins. Perhaps it is that the mystery which shrouds their origin gives greater play to the imagination! One cannot even form a guess as to who the builders of this structure were, nor for what purpose it was erected.

My friend Mr. George Phillips, who was among the first of Englishmen to visit Zimbabye, told me that when he questioned the Kaffirs about the ruins they replied that whoever built

them must have done so "before the stones were hard!" The Kaffir mind is unable to comprehend building with hewn stone; it has not yet advanced beyond a knowledge of constructing huts of mud.

For myself, I must confess to being unable to see anything very remarkable about the actual stones. It appears to me quite natural that the builders—whoever they were—should have made use of what was ready to hand; and the granite thereabouts scales off in enormous flakes, which, with very little labour, could be readily shaped, and placed in position by moderately skilful workmen. That the constructors of the original structure were acquainted with the principles of building is shown by the carefully broken joints in every successive tier.

Far more remarkable are the walls on the adjacent hill-top. The building of this vallum along the edge of these high cliffs is wholly

unaccountable. If this wall has been constructed for defensive purposes, why have they been so very careful to build it along the edge of inaccessible cliffs? It may seem somewhat presumptuous on my part to question what Mr. Bent —who has made places of this description his special study—has written or said; but I should like to suggest that the tall, upright stones fixed in the summit of the walls may have been placed there as posts around which ropes were attached to form a protection for those who manned the walls, ready to repel an attack by the enemy. We see long slabs of slate utilised in a similar manner in Wales; and in modern half-civilised South Africa I have seen stones used in the same way for straining wire-fencing, when iron posts are unobtainable and wooden ones would be too quickly destroyed by insects.

One thing that puzzled me was the question of the water-supply for the former dwellers within

the surrounding wall, in the case of a siege by their enemies. On the hill there is evidently water at certain periods of the year, but when I

INTERIOR OF TEMPLE, ZIMBABYE.

was there there was none, and the natives drew their water from springs outside the line of the ruined wall. It would have afforded me great interest to have spent several months at Zimbabye

examining these old ruins on the hill, with the object of endeavouring to discover the true reason for their erection, and, more especially, why the smaller walls are built across the narrow passages, rendering it impossible for more than one person to pass at a time. There is a theory that an underground passage connects the Hill Fort with the Temple. The paucity of decoration on these buildings is remarkable; and what little ornamentation there is (which is arrived at by means of a fanciful way of laying the stones), is altogether on the eastern side, suggesting that the builders were devoted to sun-worship.

Many interesting specimens of gold workmanship are being found in this vicinity, such as wrought gold beads, gold foil which has evidently been attached to something with small gold tacks, finely drawn and beautifully twisted gold wire, besides pieces of crucibles, often with a small nugget of gold attached to them. Curiously

enough, amber and small coloured glass beads, precisely similar to those of modern manufacture, are found in the same layer of earth as these gold relics. This seems to prove that the workers in gold either did not live in times so remote from the present as was at first supposed, or that they understood the making of glass as well as the working of precious metals. If these glass beads date from the time of the Queen of Sheba, or Solomon's Temple, it proves that the 'fashion' in beads has not changed during these centuries, and that history repeats itself in minor details as well as in the great events which cause the rise and fall of nations; for then glass beads were similar in size, colour, and shape, to those in use at the present time for barter with the Kaffirs. Possibly the most interesting remains found here are pieces of very fine red pottery, with gilt ornamentation. Should one chance to be discovered bearing some figures or species of writing, it

might be more easy to fix the date of the buildings; but without the mystery that now enshrouds the ruins they would possess but half their charm.

It is highly gratifying to learn that Mr. Rhodes has taken steps to have the bones of that band of heroes under Major Wilson, who preferred facing certain death *together*, to escaping with their lives and deserting the few comrades who had lost their horses, removed from the scene of the massacre on the Shangani River, to be interred at Zimbabye, as the most fitting resting-place for these brave comrades. I believe the Company have prohibited prospecting within a distance of half a mile of the ruins.

Having received Dr. Jameson's message, calling on everybody to come into Victoria and help to repel the Matabeles, we set out to obey it, but at the moment of starting were requested by a young man to visit his partner, who was

very ill of fever. We found the old prospector, who had spent the best part of his life in the gold-fields of Australia and California, and finally

PART OF WALLS INSIDE THE TEMPLE, ZIMBABYE.

come to this new Eldorado, past the reach of human aid. A little hot Liebig served to revive him for a short time—brandy might have been of more use, but there was not a drop nearer

than Victoria; but fever had undermined a once robust constitution, and his heart failing to perform its functions, he passed away quietly and calmly in the little lean-to of branches and grass erected against the mighty walls of the ancient temple. Under the shadow of these mysterious walls he departed for shadows yet more mysterious, without having enlightened us as to his identity, or told us whether he had any "belongings." Unknown, he went to the Unknown.

We buried him beneath a tree directly opposite the south-west gate, a kindly missionary, for whom we had sent, confiding his soul to the mercy of the Almighty. A rude counterpart of the emblem of Christianity cut roughly on the tree which overshadows his grave, may possibly cause the passer-by in days to come to remember upon what a frail and slender cord the Future depends from the Present—the Hereafter from the Here.

However, it is not for me to moralise. We left Zimbabye after performing our simple but solemn duties to the dead, and, on reaching Victoria,

PARADE.

found everything in preparation for the taking of active measures against the Matabeles, as a surer way of preventing them from renewing their attacks than by merely standing on the defensive.

The political situation was such that no forward movement had been ordered, although such an order was hourly, if not momentarily, expected, and the pros and cons were being freely discussed at each and every of the many bars with which the town abounds.

On the 2nd of October, however, at the big Review before Dr. Jameson, he announced that orders had been received for the troops to march that afternoon, and great joy and excitement prevailed in consequence.

The Matabeles are not an agricultural people, save in so far as they are compelled to till a certain area of land yearly for the cultivation of melons and pumpkins, which they cut into strips and dry in the sun, and of Kaffir-corn and mealies, which form their staple articles of diet, and from which they make their beer. The work of tilling the soil and brewing the beer is relegated to the women; while the men do

that of fighting, and drinking the aforesaid beer.

These Matabeles were originally Fingoes who left Charka's sway and located themselves at Marico and Mahalisburg—places situated in the country which now forms part of the Transvaal. Being driven thence, first by Dingan and later by the Boers, they were obliged to seek another country, and settled finally in what is now called Matabeleland, which lies on the borders of Mashonaland. There the king, 'Mziligasi ("Town-captured-by-blood"), left the bulk of his people and went with an army in a north-westerly direction to find a ford whereby he might cross the Zambesi. The natives there agreed to take the king and his army across the river; but when they had brought them to an island at the junction of the Chobe and the Zambesi, they left the Matabeles thereon, and clearing off during the night with their boats, refused to help them to

move either backward or forward, and thus they were left to perish in the swamps, or be starved to death. The greater portion of 'Mziligasi's forces managed to regain the shore by ferrying themselves across on bundles of reeds tied together; but many were drowned, and the numerous crocodiles, which they dreaded more even than their enemies, enjoyed a grand feast at the expense of this ill-starred pioneer army.

On returning to his people, after his protracted absence, the king found that a new king, Ekanda (Kurruman), had been elected in his stead; and he was in consequence compelled to fight his own people in order to regain his sceptre. This battle took place at the hill known ever since as Tabas Induna (the Hill of the Slaughter of the Indunas). The brother of Lobengula (Ekanda) had to fly from the country, and lived in exile for many ears with Sir T Shepstone; and, on returning

to his own people, they declined to have anything to say to him.

A kraal was now erected, and the king organised an army—the army which the Chartered Company's forces had to fight—on the same lines as that of the Zulus proper. This army is composed of many regiments, distinguished from each other by their various shields of raw bullock-hide. Some carry shields of black hide, others of black-and-white or red, or red-and-white, while others, again, bear those which are blue or red-roan in colour. I have been informed that all the young regiments must carry black shields until age or prowess has entitled them to be classed among the veterans, when they adopt shields of some distinctive colour.

These regiments have different names. For example, "Inyati," signifying "Buffaloes;" "Inguba," "the Blankets;" "Insukamena," "Start-at-Midday;" "Umshlopi," "the White Regi-

ment;" "Inshlashendali," "Clear-the-Road!" and "I'gubi," "Gambo's (a small calabash) Regiment," etc., etc. Each of the young regiments has its own military kraal, women, cattle, and queen, and forms practically a little community of its own. The men composing the old regiments are tried and proved warriors, drawn from the nation at large, and they assemble at Buluwayo. The king was commander-in-chief of the whole army, as well as being head steward over the cattle of the entire nation. Lobengula was, I believe, the largest cattle-owner in the world, and possessed a wonderful eye for, and memory of, an ox; so much so, that having once seen an ox pass before him he was able to recollect its appearance and recognise it again anywhere. On one occasion he ordered a man to bring him the side of a hide from which he was to make a shield, describing the hide he required. The man returned with the wrong one, and when, after several failures, he succeeded in

finding the right one, Lobengula ordered him to bring the other side also. As in the first instance, he made several attempts before bringing the companion side for his shield; and when Lobengula was asked how he could so accurately recollect both sides, he remarked, "If I see one side I *must* know what the other is like." And he undoubtedly did.

Once settled in the country, the Matabeles naturally found themselves in want of cattle, by the possession of which the wealth of the South African is computed. Accordingly, every year, immediately after the big dance, the king threw his assegai in the direction in which he proposed to send his Impis on a raid, for the purpose of capturing whatever cattle and women they could, the women being used as slaves and as wives for the conquered nations under the rule of the king, who supplied part of the army, the true Matabele being only

allowed to marry women of his own race. In these raids, all the men of the conquered tribes were killed, with the exception of those considered young enough to be trained for the army.

After a time, the Matabeles discovered that the poor, miserable Mashonas were an easy prey, and year after year they turned their warlike attention in their direction, rushing into the small "starts" built up on high castellated kopjes, killing all the men and old women, and frequently even the younger ones and their babies, in order to be able to boast of having "blooded their spears."

By reason of these raids, many women fell to the share of each of these warriors, and successive generations degenerated, while growing, as bullies and cowards invariably will, more and more bloodthirsty, in proportion as their wretched victims became more terrified at

their approach, and less able to withstand their onslaughts.

The Matabeles, in truth, were simply the bullies of smaller and weaker nations, and could make no stand against real fighting people; as witness the Lake N'gami war, when they were beaten, more perhaps by stratagem than by force; and the expedition of the Impis against the Barotsis, when they returned like whipped curs with their tails between their legs. In the former case Khama, I learn, shot Lobengula through the neck.

As time progressed they became so emboldened by their successes against the wretched Mashonas that they began to think they could frighten the white men, who were settling in the country, but whose presence in such close proximity to their own district was always looked upon with disfavour by the Matabeles, into either quietly allowing them to raid and kill the

Mashonas without being checked, or even, perchance, into evacuating the country altogether when they found that they could not get the Mashonas to work for them, for fear of the Matabeles. In this way leaving them to pursue their bloodthirsty career freed from the dread of a possible controlling power.

On the 19th of July last year they actually came rushing through Victoria, stabbing and assegaing the men in the very streets and houses. They even went so far as to threaten similar treatment to the white men, if they dared to interfere for the prevention of such a state of things. On one occasion, I heard of a wretched Mashona who rushed up to a white man, and clung on to him for protection, and when he tried to defend him with his fists, having no other weapon of defence handy, he was overpowered by several Matabeles, who held their assegais at his head and body, while others killed

the unfortunate man at his feet. What was to be done when things had come to such a pass as this? It is impossible for the stay-at-home Briton to imagine the enormous damage they were inflicting on the white men, coming, as they did, in and out of the houses, threatening them and killing their servants. With such proceedings going on before their eyes, it must have been extremely hard for the colonists in Victoria to stay their hands against these savages, especially as many of them had wives and daughters to protect; and the forbearance shown by the late Captain Lendy, who was chief magistrate at Victoria at that time, and by the inhabitants generally, reflects much credit on their feelings of humanity and powers of self-control. Captain Lendy issued orders forbidding any one to shoot; and during those days when the Victoria folk had to take refuge in the fort, there must have been many fingers itching to

"draw a bead" on the Matabeles who were raiding their homes and destroying their means of subsistence. It must be remembered that these settlers had not come out to South Africa for sport or amusement, but to work and make the money necessary to enable them to return to their native country and enjoy a peaceful old age. Although many men settle down in the Colonies and make a home for themselves there, I verily believe that there is ever present in their minds the hope of some day re-visiting the shores of dear old Britain, where the happy days of their childhood have been spent. Under such circumstances, it would seem perfectly natural that they should wish to retaliate on the savages, who had put a stop to all trade, mining industry, and prosperity, which was just beginning to repay the large outlay of capital which had been sunk in the country; but, on the contrary, they remained a colony of law-abiding

citizens, and refrained from taking any retaliatory action, for fear of complicating the policy of the Company, until the arrival of Dr. Jameson. He at once called an "indaba" of the head indunas of the Impis encamped on the neighbouring hills, and requested to be informed of the why and the wherefore of their presence across the recognised "border."

They answered impudently, feigning ignorance of any border; which being interpreted meant, "You white men have no right here, and consequently we do not recognise your right." On this, Dr. Jameson gave them the lie direct, a proceeding not usually taken, even with savages, except under very great provocation, when plain-speaking has become absolutely necessary. He further ordered them to retire across the border-line within a specified time; adding that unless they obeyed he would "drive them over it." It was observed that they knew then in which

direction the border lay! One of the indunas defied Dr. Jameson to do what he had threatened. Later on in that day the induna learnt, at the cost of his life, that when the Doctor says he will do anything—he does it.

The allotted time having expired, together with that of an hour's grace, a patrol of thirty men was despatched to see that the Doctor's injunction had been obeyed. The patrol fell in with many Matabele stragglers, some of whom were shot, and amongst them the impudent induna who had snapped his fingers in Dr. Jameson's face, and defied him to put his threats into execution.

It was hoped that the punishment thus inflicted by the Company would have had a salutary effect, but it soon became evident that the chastisement had not been sufficiently severe. They continued to hang about the Mashonaland border, making raids on the wretched Makalakas at Matabis,

o the south of Victoria, and even threatening Tuli.

Everything was now at a standstill—the mines hut down, and transport riders afraid or unable o travel, being deprived of their "leaders" ınd "drivers," or only being able to do so by engthy and circuitous routes to avoid meeting vith the Matabeles. I did not meet any wagons while coming north on the main road at his time, save only those of some few Dutch- nen, with their families and great hulking ons, trekking down as hard as they could, ınd asking me with terror-stricken voices "if I had met any Matabeles?" Even so many of hem only felt safe when taking a devious and ınfrequented route, which led them past Zim- babye, and consequently through the "fly," where hey were richly rewarded for their cowardice by he loss of many of their oxen. The Matabeles hey met would not have interfered with them,

even as they did not molest me and my companions; and had these transport riders kept to the main road in the ordinary way, it would have given confidence to others, and shown the Matabeles that the white men were not afraid of them. Of course, I am not blaming every one indiscriminately; some were going down for the purpose of "loading up;" but I do most *decidedly* blame those men calling themselves "Britishers" who declared openly that they were going away "because Victoria and the country "generally was unsafe." These men selfishly sought to save their own skins, not caring what became of the numerous white women and children then in Victoria, whom they left behind, and whom it was without doubt their first duty to remain and protect; and the greater the danger, surely the more imperative was it that they should stay and render what assistance they could.

It was extraordinary, the abject terror with which the mere word " Matabele " seemed to infect everybody, both black and white alike. I confess

VICTORIA-TULI MAIL COACH.

myself unable to comprehend it, and had given no credence to the stories that we had heard from the natives while on the Umtelique River. But when, day after day, I met Dutchmen and, to

CHAPTER IX

Training of the Victoria Column—The Maxim Guns—The rest of the Artillery—The Inspection and March-past—The March out of Victoria—The Catholic Sisters—Fifteen-Mile Start—Laagers—A False Alarm—We join the Main Body — Traces of the Matabeles.

EVERYBODY in Victoria was now a soldier "of sorts"—that is, if he was not a policeman. Little business was done, except in the bars, where it never seemed to flag ; and every one who was not one way or another employed in these establishments was being drilled and equipped in readiness to repel the expected attack, which might take place at any moment.

Passing along the street one morning, I joined a motley crowd of white men in their shirt-sleeves ; Kaffirs half naked, or perhaps proud in

the possession of a tall hat, or a waistcoat; Dutch and British transport riders, prospectors, etc., who were watching the sale by auction of a curious medley of goods, guns, trucks, saddles, brushes, jams, etc. Two of the numerous dogs which hung about the town, thinking this an opportune moment to settle some long-standing feud, agreed to try conclusions on the spot, and instantly the whole concourse of spectators adjourned to witness the fight, and give their opinions upon the various merits and chances of the antagonists. After a while, however, with the aids of bricks and sticks, the animals were separated, and the assembly dispersed to gather once more around the auctioneer, who took up the bidding for an old pair of boots where it had left off prior to this little interlude. Then an adjournment was made to the nearest bar to discuss the latest telegrams, which are daily posted up in the "Thatched House."

Horses were being sent up from Johannesburg, and eventually they arrived; but the long, trying marches, and the bad riding of many of the men who had been sent with them, had undermined their health and condition and literally worn big holes in many backs and withers. The horses, on the whole, were not bad, and only needed rest and good food to be rendered perfectly serviceable.

Unfortunately, this was just what we were unable to give them, for shortly after the arrival of the third consignment, the Matabeles, evidently emboldened by the passive attitude of the Company, went so far as to fire on a patrol of Captain the Hon. C. J. White's mounted police, which had gone out some thirty or forty miles to the north-west of Victoria.

The fat was now in the fire, and we were marshalled in readiness to take the initiative against them, as a surer and better way of

attaining the end desired than by simply standing on the defensive.

All now recognised the dangers and hardships of such a step, and that they were a mere handful against an enemy reported to be twenty thousand strong; but they also felt that to remain inactive would be to lose everything they had gained during their three years' occupation of the country; and the alternative, namely, that of deserting Victoria, and allowing it to fall into ruins like its ancient neighbour, Zimbabye, was not a pleasant one; nor was the loss of capital sunk in the gold-workings, and evidenced by the shafts, batteries, engines, and other machines of the latest type and on the most scientific principles, any more cheerful to contemplate.

The most important part of the preparations for war was the drilling of men to use and manage the Maxim guns, which we knew we

were to have the honour of being the first to put to a practical test. They had been tried before on several occasions with varying success; but in this case we were staking our lives on their power and efficiency. It has been calculated that each gun is worth two hundred men; but surely it is worth more, for it does not require two hundred horses to transport it—six are sufficient. Nor is there the necessity of providing rations for two hundred men and the same number of horses, together with the wagons for carrying these rations, and animals, which must also be fed, for drawing the wagons. It must be remembered that each additional wagon extra to those absolutely required for forming the laager is only an encumbrance to the column; and of course the more numerous the wagons, the longer it takes to form the laager, and consequently the greater the advantage to the enemy, if he attacks.

The great drawback to the Maxim is the quantity of ammunition it requires to keep it properly fed during a lengthy engagement; the transport of the vast quantities of ammunition both for machine guns and magazine rifles will be a serious consideration in all future wars. It seems to me that the chief concern of commanders will be to keep the firing line supplied with fuel in the shape of cartridges; and when the ammunition-wagons have unloaded, the "returned empties" will be a source of inconvenience, though I am sure that the Transport branch of the Army Service Corps will grapple successfully with the difficulty when the time comes. For all these reasons, it is fortunate that the cartridges for the new Magazine Rifle are so small and light.

Captain Lendy was careful to instruct all his men not only in the theory of the Maxim, but also in the use of the various parts of its

terribly complicated Chinese-puzzle of a lock; and this to such an extent that not only was each man able to take a lock to pieces, but he could also put it together again in a very few minutes. He thoughtfully provided each gun with a spare lock, so that if anything went wrong, the original lock could be taken out, and the spare one used during its repair, and thus prevent the gun being out of action for any length of time. He also arranged for the supply of several spare main-springs and other parts most liable to get out of order or damaged.

Each gun was mounted on its own carriage, and carried its tripod. And we had a couple of pack-saddles to put them on, for easier and more speedy transport, in case we should have to go where wheels could not travel.

It must not, however, be imagined that attention was solely devoted to the Maxims; the men were also instructed in the handling of the

7-pounder and Hotchkiss guns. The latter gun, it may be interesting to note, had at one time belonged to the Portuguese, and had been turned

HOTCHKISS GUN.

on the Chartered Company's forces at Massi Kessi, when, under Captain Heyman, they advanced and so frightened the Portuguese troops that they fled, leaving their ready-cooked dinners for the

Company's men to enjoy. It was a good little gun, but the carriage was rather small, and at times I used to feel uneasy at seeing it bumping about over rough ground behind its big square limber (shall I call it ?), drawn by six oxen. However, my fears were luckily not realised, the gunners, under Lieutenant Rixon, protecting it from injury, and strengthening the wheels where they had got shaken.

The 7-pounder, mounted on a carriage, was placed in a wagon at the head of the column, and was furnished with a wooden platform, by means of which it could be easily run up and down over the tail-board of the wagon. Sergeant Peter Macintyre and his men were very proud of their gun, and took great care of it.

While Captains Lendy and Reid were training the artillery at Victoria, Major Wilson was superintending the training, drilling, and equipping of the various companies under the

respective commands of Captains Fitzgerald, Bastard, Napier, and Judd; in which he was most ably assisted by Captain Kennelly, the adjutant who had formerly served in the B. B. P. They were encamped a few miles to the north-west of Victoria. During this time Mr. Kirton was occupied in getting wagons and oxen together. It is very necessary in that country to exercise great care and thoroughness in over-hauling the wagons supplied, especially as to the soundness of wheels, bolts, nuts, etc., and more particularly to make sure that none of them are old wagons painted up to look like new. I found generally while in South Africa that one has to keep one's eyes quite as wide open as, if not even somewhat wider, than when at home. We got all our wagons into Buluwayo, though we had to patch up several wheels and some of the "long wagons;" still, as we got them there, I suppose we must not complain; and

if due care and trouble had not been taken, I very much doubt whether we should not have been obliged to abandon several of them—and I daresay I may be more critical and prone to pick holes in transport than if I belonged to the country which has taught *us* so much on the subject.

For several weeks there were doubts as to whether we should take the offensive or not. The responsible people at Victoria, at Cape Town, and at Home, did not seem to be at one over it. In the whole of Victoria, amongst the men composing the column and, from what I have since learned, amongst those forming the contingents from Forts Salisbury and Charter, there was not one dissentient voice. All were clamouring "to be at 'em." Great, therefore, was the rejoicing when word came that all political obstacles had been removed, and that we were to start forthwith. At the same time we learned

that Commandant Raaff with his men were to march from Tuli, and that the Bechuanaland Border Police were to be near to render assistance if necessary. Major Forbes wired that the laager his column could form was "practically impregnable."

On the morning of October 5th there was a big parade and march-past before Dr. Jameson. There were our troops of mounted men, under Captain Napier, Captain Fitzgerald, Captain Judd, and Captain Bastard. In all two hundred mounted men, and the artillery under Captain Lendy, with horses and two Maxims, a quick-firing Hotchkiss, and a 7-lb. gun.

Altogether they were a fine-looking lot of men, and with their brown cord jackets and "smasher" hats, bandoliers and rifles, looked very workmanlike, if somewhat rough. Each man looked determined that, come what might, he would render a good account of himself,

and their actions did not belie their looks, as subsequent events proved.

I was not satisfied with the appearance of the horses. Poor things, they had been driven up some thousand miles from Johannesburg, and sadly wanted a good long rest and good feeding; but further delay was out of the question, and we hoped to find good grass for them *en route* and that they would improve in condition before really hard work was required of them.

Doctor Jameson addressed the men briefly, thanking them all for coming, and stated that they were to march to the front that afternoon. He is a man of marvellous tact, with a remarkable gift of being able to say just the right thing and no more. On returning to the camp, he received quite an ovation from the troops, which must have been highly gratifying to him, as showing the good-will that existed among those under his orders.

The troops marched out to the front about 4 p.m., and in the evening we heard that a patrol of the Bechuanaland Border Police had been fired upon near Macloutsi, so we knew now that the enemy were all along our western border, and that they had to be driven back in front of us at all points, to prevent them re-entering Mashonaland. Captain White's police scouts had also been fired on while patrolling at a distance of about thirty miles from the camp a few days previously.

My position was rather unique, and it was difficult to know how I ought to act. I had no personal quarrel with, nor enmity against, the Matabeles; they had never done me any harm, and I was not engaged in any way to the Company; and altogether, from my ignorance of the political situation, and from the conflicting stories I heard, I was not altogether satisfied at the time as to whether the war

was justifiable or otherwise. However, I felt that it would look like a case of "showing the white feather" if I was to hold back from joining in what seemed likely to become a difficult and trying campaign, where hard knocks were probably going to be both given and taken. I was perfectly satisfied later that I had taken the right course of duty, and that the war was not only justifiable, but also absolutely necessary at the time, in order to prevent further and more serious trouble later on.

The few loads of meal for which we were waiting and which we had sent some men down to hurry up—although a Dutch transport rider can never be hurried—having at length arrived, the artillery to which I was attached started on the morning of the 7th. Every man was in his place and as orderly as possible, despite the various bottles of whisky hidden away wherever it was possible to stow them. All the men

composing this volunteer fighting body, even when somewhat the worse for liquor, never for a moment forgot discipline, which alone speaks

MAXIM GUN FORMING POINT OF LAAGER.

volumes to their credit and shows how thoroughly their hearts were in the work which they had undertaken.

We put oxen in the Maxim carriages, to save

the horses as much as possible, and I am afraid there was little of military dignity in the scene when, Captain Lendy having given the order to "advance," a chorus of yells, cracking of whips, and shouts of "Yéks!" arose all along the line; or when, amid oft-repeated cries of "An-now!" the leaders jumped about in front of the oxen, waving and gesticulating their arms frantically, and hurling stones and sand in the animals' faces to make them halt. Such scenes would scarcely be calculated to impress a foreign potentate who had been brought down to Aldershot to witness a review in the Long Valley. But oxen, if not ornamental, are useful, no other animal being able to do the work so well in that country. It is different when good roads are available and the rivers are bridged.

On our way out we stopped at the Hospital to bid good-bye to the Father, Mothers, and Sisters, who, by their constant self-devotion,

kindness, and tender care to the sick, had endeared themselves to every one. We partook of a parting cup of tea under their hospitable roof, and proceeded on our journey encouraged by their sincere good wishes for the welfare of our bodies, and with our souls entrusted to the keeping of a Higher Power. Surely, if in the future there are "crowns to be won," these unselfish men and women, who leave home and country, and dedicate their lives to assisting and comforting other men who are ailing in mind or body, will deserve a double share of glory for their devotion to the human race, irrespective of colour, nation, or creed. May God indeed bless them! is our sincere wish, from the innermost depths of our heart.

On the following day we passed Fifteen-Mile Start. All small villages are called "starts;" they consist of wattle-and-daub huts, thatched with grass, and are built on the sides of kopjes,

the huts being frequently hidden, when viewed from below, by huge boulders. The inhabitants, as seen from a distance dodging about among these rocks and stones, look more like rock-rabbits than human beings.

Fifteen-Mile Start is built on a huge granite rock, utterly inaccessible on three sides, while on the fourth a deep cleft going sheer down for about sixty feet has to be bridged. The Mashonas living there laid in a stock of provisions, and allowed the Matabeles to sit down and attempt to starve them out, a proceeding of which they soon tired and presently decamped, leaving the Mashonas, for once, masters of the situation.

These Mashonas are "'cute beggars," for when we "commandeered" cattle there, they swore they had none, and that those we saw belonged to a white man occupying a neighbouring farm, who had joined the column. We did not, how-

ever, find them scrupulous in the matter of eating any remnants of this supposititious farmer's sheep that were to be picked up after we had finished our repast.

FRIENDLY NATIVES WITH MEALIES.

All along the line of march the inhabitants of nearly every village sent us down supplies of mealies, corn, and monkey-nuts; and it was a great pity that some of the men got out of hand

now and then, and commenced raiding on their own account. This naturally frightened the friendlies, and made them fear us almost as much as they did the Matabeles. This would never have done, for it was most essential for us to keep our line of retreat free from difficulties, in case we should meet with a mishap, and be obliged to fall back upon Victoria again. It must, however, be added, that whenever such conduct was found out, there was trouble for the culprits; and after a short time no one attempted any violence to persons or property.

On one occasion, when passing a small village surrounded by a strong thorn hedge, several of us asked the natives for beer and monkey-nuts. They immediately supplied them, and after making them drink some first, we enjoyed a refreshing draught ourselves. It was then noticed that some of the Johannesburg "Foot-Sloggers" (who had come up with the horses,

and were a very rough lot of fellows, but who did some really good work later on) were doing damage in the village, destroying corn-bins, and so on. Major Wilson and Captain Delamere at once put a stop to this conduct, and ordered all the men out of the village. Discipline, although apparently lax for the time, was at once restored, and no man attempted to disobey.

We pushed on steadily for two days, finding but indifferent supplies of grass and water, and then left the main road, near Makouri's, and crossed a small river. Up to this time, not anticipating any attack, we had simply allowed the wagons at night to remain where they were halted, and "turned in" quietly after tea. About 2 a.m. the following morning, however, a mounted messenger arrived with orders to Captain Lendy from the front (which was distant some fifteen miles) "to look out, as enemy reported near, and may attack at any moment." A small laager

was consequently formed with the few wagons we had, the guns posted in the most advantageous positions, and every preparation made to repel the possible onslaught, which was momentarily expected, in the dark. Thus we remained until some while after sunrise, when finding ourselves unmolested, and the scouts sent out into the surrounding bush, which was pretty thick, reporting that they had found nothing of an alarming nature, we resumed our march about 9 a.m. and joined the rest of the Column, which was encamped on and around two large granite kopjes.

We of the artillery were hospitably received by the various troops, and a substantial repast provided for us. The Maxim guns were placed in fine, commanding positions, and instructive lectures upon the theory and working of them were given during the two days we remained here, by the officers of the artillery, to all who

cared to attend; and at each lecture there were large and attentive audiences, for we all felt that it would be worse than useless to have one of these guns and yet be unable to use it. So every precaution was taken to guard against unforeseen accidents.

On the westernmost of these kopjes, signs of a not far remote Matabele visitation were to be seen in the numerous skulls and bones lying in the nooks and crannies where the ruins of their burnt huts had stood, among the rocks. These silent remnants of a past Mashona humanity spoke for themselves.

CHAPTER X.

The Conditions of Service—Castellated Kopjes—Junction with the Salisbury Column—First Brush with the Enemy—Death of Campbell—Capture of Cattle—Man-yéze—Insukameni Kraal—Shangani Battle—The Maxims in Action—Superstition of the Matabeles—Their Blood-thirstiness and Brutality.

ON the 12th, everything having been found in order, we resumed our march. Victoria's complete force was now out of touch with civilisation and entirely dependent on its own resources, which were a month or six weeks' provisions which we carried in the wagons. We knew we should now hold no communication with our countrymen until we met the Salisbury Column, under Major Forbes, when together we were to force our way into Buluwayo, or let our bones bleach in common on the veldt.

All the men forming the expedition were, it may be mentioned, volunteers, and had engaged to go in and fight in consideration of receiving each a farm of three thousand morgans (a morgan equalling two acres), together with twenty gold-claims, and a share of half the "loot" (the other half going to the Company), receiving no pay after crossing the Shashi river, with the exception of the dismounted men recruited at Johannesburg, who were enlisted at the rate of five shillings per diem, clothing, and rations. Before leaving the camp at the two kopjes the men were asked if they would like to change their terms of enlistment. Few did so, except where two "pals" decided to go halves in farm and claims, in which case one took the farm and claims, the other taking the five shillings per day. But not more than half a dozen did so.

Our route now lay through many castellated

kopjes of granite situated close together, most of which were inhabited and surrounded by mealie gardens. The huts presented a curious appearance, stuck on the summits of the rocks like rather tall beehives, the natives having evidently found this a safer position for their homes than the level plain ; their enemies being, of course, at a considerable disadvantage in having to find the narrow paths leading to them through the huge boulders. These kopjes form a remarkable feature of Mashonaland, suggesting that at some far remote time an immense inland sea had covered all this territory, and had collected these rocks (weighing many tons apiece) together in eddies, which piled them one above another. Frequently one or more may be seen so delicately poised that it seems as if the lighting of a butterfly on one end thereof would destroy the balance and cause their overthrow.

On October 13th we left Charka's Kraal,—where Mr. Quested had collected a couple of hundred native allies,—and crossed the Shashi River,

NATIVE ALLIES.

where it was only a few yards in width, flowing over a flat granite bed, which, although somewhat slippery for the horses, which were shod, caused but one accident. A few spades-full of sand

scattered judiciously about saved further trouble and delay. Personally, I consider the shoeing of the horses to have been rather a mistake, and should have let them run without shoes, as there was very little likelihood of our encountering hard ground, and with our small resources it seemed a pity to hamper ourselves by creating a demand for skilled labour which we could not always hope to supply. For instance, what would have happened had our shoeing-smith been shot? Besides which we had to take in a small forge and spare shoes, all of which add to the weight for transport. But I suppose the heads that ordered the shoeing were wiser and more far-seeing than I. Fortunately we did not experience any real difficulty in the matter; but after our trial of unshod shooting horses, I should always advocate letting animals remain in a state as near to what Nature made them as possible. It is very different when

dealing with the hard, macadamised roads of civilisation, but out there those sort of roads do not exist; and, moreover, we were to make our own road across the veldt.

All this while we were gradually ascending, the streams flowing mostly in a southerly or westerly direction towards the Limpopo. The country became more open and the castellated kopjes were replaced by huge granite boulders, similar to, although smaller than, those passed on the road up to Mashonaland between the Bubyé and the Lundi. The bush consisted chiefly of "Sugar-bush"—a sure sign of poor land. It is thus styled on account of the sweetness in its flowers, which I was unable to discover, and considered metaphorical and to be found only by comparison with the ordinary thorny bushes, which are anything but sweet when they investigate the tender parts of the human body.

On the 16th, in heavy rain, we passed through a very different region, leaving the granite formation behind, and finding ourselves in a sandstone country, alternating with clay slate, with a slight sprinkling of quartz. We encamped in laager on the west side of a small stream, south of Tabas Insimba, or "Iron Mine Hill"; having the Salisbury laager distant about half a mile on the other side. Near this spot poor Campbell, of the Salisbury Column, late a Captain in the Royal Artillery, had been shot on the previous day. While endeavouring to capture some cattle he was attacked by Matabeles who had ensconced themselves behind some large rocks, and from this position of safety were firing at our men in the open; after undergoing the terrible operation of amputation at the hip, he succumbed within twenty-four hours, and was buried with military honours by the Right Rev. Knight Bruce, Lord Bishop of Mashona-

land. The Bishop had joined the Columns with his green canvas boat-like wagon, built by the Bristol Wagon Works Company, from his own design; and a very comfortable vehicle it looked for travelling in, during times of peace, provided as it was with springs.

Up to a few days before this we had slept anywhere outside the laager within the line of sentries; but on the 14th, receiving news from our scouts of the presence of five impis within striking distance, engaged in watching our movements, all men were ordered to sleep inside the laager, a regulation observed during the remainder of the expedition, no material alteration being made except that we were told off to different wagons and that each man slept at his own post, either on or under the wagon, as the case might be.

During all this period every day witnessed the passage of vast numbers of natives going forward

"to the war." They passed our camp in hundreds, a big, ragged mob of dusky savages, singing, dancing, and flourishing their guns, assegais, and

NATIVE CONTINGENT.

bows-and-arrows, and threatening the total annihilation of the Matabele race. Some thousands must have thus gone by; but a few days later we met an equal number returning!

They never showed up at any of the fights, with the exception of those commanded by Messrs. Quested and Brabant. The native contingent raised by these gentlemen did much valuable service in bringing in supplies of corn (mealies) for our horses, who, altogether, had a bad time of it, poor brutes; for, being on the march all day long, they had no opportunity to feed, save during the mid-day "outspan," and in the evening; and the grass was very poor.

It was to me a strange sight to see the whole troop of horses turned out loose to graze at their own sweet will on the scanty herbage, which was all that remained after the "dry season," with but four or five men as "grazing-guard" to keep them from straying, straggling, or getting out of sight. But the system worked well, and I don't think any were actually lost. Now and then some strayed, but they were invariably brought in next day.

At "Horses In" being sounded on the bugle, the grazing-guard drove them all up towards the laager, and each man went and caught

INTERIOR OF LAAGER.

his own horse, brought him in, and tied him on to the picket-lines stretched across the laager and fixed to the wheels. At such times it was very advisable to remain by one's horse while he

ate his corn, as each owner knew how necessary it was to look after the animal on which at any time he might have to depend for his life, and that the more corn that animal individually obtained the better it was for his rider.

Up to this time we had captured about five hundred head of cattle, and now sent them back, in charge of numerous natives, to Victoria.

The country from this point alternated between flat, open plains and thick belts of bush through which roads were cut by a band of natives under Mr. Harry Ware, the Zambesi trader. This was no easy task to get accomplished, for each native was encumbered by his inevitable blanket, and is by no means a keen gentleman for work at the best of times. Every time a tree had to be felled the native had to deposit carefully on the ground his blanket, gun, assegai, calabash of water, and lump of meat, before commencing operations; and, the task ended, all these paraphernalia had to

be deliberately collected and resumed before he could proceed to repeat the performance at the next tree. Of course these trees are not of large dimensions, being seldom more than a foot or so in diameter, and when encountered of larger size, they could easily be avoided.

In order to find our way, albeit we all knew the general direction in which Buluwayo lay, each column was supplied with a "guide," who was supposed to know every hill and rock in the district. But without wishing to cast any aspersion on their "guiding," I must say that without the assistance of old Man-yéze I fear we should have sometimes gone astray. He was an old chief who having, in the opinion of Lobengula, shown signs of growing too strong, that potentate despatched his warriors and "wiped out" the whole of his followers. The old gentleman chanced fortunately to be a-hunting on the occasion of this wholesale slaughter, and so

escaped. He was now only too delighted to have a chance of revenge, and assist in the destruction of his enemy, and came and offered his services to Dr. Jameson, who gladly accepted them. After a time, this old gentleman, dressed in an old French uniform great-coat, got tired and unable to keep up with Mr. "Matabele" Wilson, our guide, so he was given a horse; and very proud indeed of himself did he feel. It was all right so long as the animal he bestrode was walking, but he had not bargained for the novel motion of trotting, and under those circumstances he found himself more frequently upon the ground than on the horse. However, nothing daunted, he stuck to it manfully, and felt himself more "at home" after a short time. It was very amusing to see this man, during the course of one of our fights, walk out of the laager, utterly regardless of the bullets, or whether he imposed his body in our "line of fire,"

deliberately place his gun in the fork of a tree, and, having discharged it with evident satisfaction to himself, calmly return, with a broad grin on his face. He was certainly a good old man, and knew accurately every stick and stone in the country, although he had not visited it since he was a young man. But the native, unaccustomed to the use of compasses, sketching materials, and Kodaks, is able to use his brains, where we, more advanced beings, have to carry maps and a library with us, and turn up the information we require by the aid of an index.

The knowledge of a country seems inherent in these people. Frequently, when hunting, a discussion would arise as to the location of such-and-such a place. One would point in one direction, the other in another, but on calling up one of the "boys" and inquiring of him, he would simply cast one rapid glance round, and then, with a "Da, baas!" point unerringly in the

right direction. It reminded me of the way in which a carrier-pigeon circles in the air, as it rises from the ground before taking a "bee-line" for home. It is entirely a matter of habit, which grows upon one, and that the more rapidly after getting lost once or twice and having perforce to forego one's dinner. One soon grows to have an instinctive feeling that the wagons are in this or that direction, even when one has been paying no heed as to where one has been going, nor the distance travelled. I fear it would have been a fruitful source of loss of both lives and time, had our own young soldiers, who are accustomed to seeing landmarks which are easily recognisable, suddenly found themselves surrounded by monotonous bush, with nothing to show them whence they came or whither they should go. All our scouts were men who had been all their lives on the veldt, and knew it intimately.

When first I found myself alone in the bush, I felt as I should imagine a man at sea would feel in an open boat, without a rudder or a compass, and out of sight of land. There is no danger as long as the sun shines; but if he is not visible, it is best to "wait till the clouds roll by," if you have not got the compass you should invariably carry.

On one occasion, while skirting the edge of the Samabula forest, we started in the early morning in a dense fog, and though the route was given by the compass, very soon some of the advanced guard found themselves mixed up with a portion of the rear-guard. It was impossible for any one to keep in touch with the column unless he was actually with it. Luckily we halted, and when the sun came out we found ourselves much closer to the previous night's outspan than the time we had been marching had led us to suppose. We heard afterwards that the enemy had

been searching for us, but had lost us in the fog. It was fortunate for us they did so.

I used to think it a mistake to start so early in the morning as we did, breaking laager at the same time that the scouts went out. Had they found the enemy close by, it would have been difficult to laager up again quickly, as the oxen won't pull well in cold yokes, and it is a recognised rule with transport riders never to allow the sun to rise on their oxen while in the yokes. At that hour the oxen always want to lie down, have a short nap and a chew. Still, as nothing untoward happened on this account, it is idle to complain; and possibly, had we wasted time nursing our oxen, we might not have done so well. Still, I think this is a point that will bear looking into, in view of British troops having similar work to do. *They* can hardly expect the proverbial luck of the Chartered Company; and without our oxen we should have

been "done for." I could never understand why the Pickfords and Hibberts of Zambezia are called transport "riders," when they never

A MIDDAY HALT.

"ride," but are constantly "drive, drive, driving" at the long team of slowly moving oxen.

On the 18th we found excellent grass; and on the 19th we halted, much to the satisfaction of

men, horses, and cattle. The former could get a wash, and the latter a good feed, both of which were sadly needed. I was down by the stream allowing my shirt to dry after washing it, and employing myself in watching a line baited with meat which we had set for barbel, which made a pleasant change of diet, when, finding something on my hook, I hauled up the line, and then beheld—a frog! which had swallowed the bait —a queer-looking beggar, with immensely long legs. We afterwards caught others at the same spot; but this was the first instance I had met with of a frog taking bait.

By this time we were in touch with the enemy, seeing and exchanging friendly shots with them daily. On the Whoi-whoi River, a few of us witnessed a strange and impressive scene. A poor fellow named Woods, who had suffered from fever, dysentery, and other complications, died during the night, and as we were to trek next

morning, a few of his comrades went out and dug a grave and buried him there in the bush by moonlight, while all the camp lay asleep, every man with his arms beside him, and each man of the burying party with his rifle ready, as we fully expected to be attacked that night. However, we were not.

Continuing our march, we crossed some large, open plains on which we saw many herds of wilde-beestes, tsessebe, (*Damalis Lunatus*) and sable antelopes; but of course we could do no hunting, for if shots had been heard in the distance we should not have known whether they were at bucks or Matabeles, and they might have led to endless confusion—although I did hear of a few being shot, and I know that certain messes on a couple of occasions even had buck-steaks for dinner! We passed many old abandoned workings, from the indications, presumably, gold. We had just crossed the Gwai River and were in laager on the

other side, when a small force under Major Wilson was despatched by night to attack the Insukamene Kraal, which alas! offered no resistance. This kraal was built on a splendid reef, with every indication of gold, in paying quantities, and well supplied with water. It was a large and very clean kraal, surrounded with a stockade; in the centre was a small enclosure with the queen's huts, than which one could never wish to see anything cleaner. The floors of the beehive-shaped huts were polished so smooth and bright that one might almost have seen the reflection of one's face in them, and inside, the walls and roof were covered with light reeds, which caused the interior to be less dark than usual; while a tasteful arrangement in coloured hides surrounded the entrance, and demonstrated an evident attempt at decoration. I was sorry that these huts, upon which such evident care had been bestowed, should

have to be destroyed by the flames from the rest of the kraal. If I had the choice of a farm, it is at this place that I would like to "peg out."

The march back to camp, after the long night march through the bush, and our disappointment at finding no resistance, was trying and wearisome, and the length of time we were in the saddle told severely on the horses. Altogether, we were right glad to get back in the evening, and to find the laager intact. Had the Insuka Regiment taken advantage of the absence of a hundred and fifty men and two Maxims to have delivered an attack, they would have had an easier task than usual.

The care taken of their horses by the men was remarkable; they nursed them, walked at their heads whenever possible, and took every opportunity to let them get a bit of grass or a drink of water. I very much fear that our

troopers would not do likewise, unless so ordered by some officer or sergeant; but we are too prone to educate our soldiers up to the pitch of being

CROSSING LAST DRIFT TO BULUWAYO.

mere machines, and they become so dependent on their officers that they cannot think for themselves. The men composing this column were accustomed to depend on their own re-

sources and exertion for their daily bread-and-butter.

We had to cross a nasty drift at the Shangani River; but by attaching a long rope to the tow-chain, and putting on every available man to pull, we ran wagon after wagon across in much less time than it would have taken to unhitch and "hock fore" another span of oxen, to say nothing of the amount of flogging and swearing which this plan prevented. The pioneer party materially expedited matters by making the drifts as practicable as possible in the available time at their disposal; putting in stones here, scarping away the banks there, and "corduroying" with bush where the ground was soft and boggy. Whenever feasible, two or more drifts were prepared as near together as possible.

On the 23rd we found ourselves in laager, the Salisbury Column on the right and that from Victoria on the left, about two hundred

yards apart, while many rescued women and children, who had been raided on former occasions by the Matabeles, were restored to their tribe. In some cases, it was re-union of husband and wife, and in others parents clasped once more their children in their arms. Some seven hundred head of cattle which had been captured during the day were enclosed in a "scherm" of bushes about the same distance to the rear. The scouts, who usually slept about a mile and a half ahead of the laager, had this night come within the line of sentries, and tethered their horses just outside the laager. There was a range of kopjes on our right, two or three hundred yards distant, a hill five hundred yards in front, and a bigger hill about a thousand yards to the left, sloping gradually up from the stream, which ran round the left and rear of our position at distances varying from two to five hundred yards. The bush

came to within a hundred yards of us, and consequently gave us but little space for an uninterrupted view.

MAXIM ON ANT-HEAP.

We knew the enemy were in close proximity, having seen their scouts on the kopjes; and old Man-yéze had always prophesied that we should be attacked on the Shangani River.

Our first intimation of their approach was by being aroused about 4 o'clock in the morning by the sound of a shot fired accidentally away on the left flank by one of the enemy, as they crept up stealthily through the bush under cover of the darkness; this became the signal for a general fusillade all round; and simultaneously there was a rush of Mashonas into the laager from the rear. The "alarm" sounded, and the whole laager, as one of the prisoners described it, "became instantly a sheet of flame," which, with the darkness and the incessant "tut-tut-tut" of the Maxims, made matters most confusing. There was nothing at which to fire save the flashes in the bush, but the Matabeles had a warm time of it in their first rush, and there was a large expenditure of ammunition. It did not, however, last long, and in a few minutes Major Wilson's control over his men was such that every one ceased firing until it was ascer-

tained that our natives and the pickets were all in safety. It reflected great credit on the men that they refrained from returning the heavy fire, which, albeit doing little damage, was unpleasant to hear, especially by the young men who had never been "under fire" before, and were now experiencing this exciting sensation for the first time.

Eventually the enemy retired, and we went out and brought in the scouts' horses, two or three of which had been badly hit.

The enemy came on again after an interval of half an hour, and as it was now growing lighter, we were able to see our sights more clearly, and use our rifles with better effect. Our men were now all very cool, and ammunition was not so recklessly expended. I heard one man turn round and ask an officer, "What sight have you got up, sir?" and when he replied, "Two hundred yards," the man remarked,

"Well, I fancy that may perhaps be better than the three hundred; I'll try it."

It was amusing to hear the shouts of joy when a Matabele was hit, every man who had fired in that direction claiming to have shot him. Perhaps this may account for the enormous totals of "killed" which we see recorded; for if every man's "bag" were counted in, it would make a formidable score, far exceeding the bodies found on the field.

Again the enemy retired, and the horsemen of the Salisbury Column, going out to reconnoitre, had a roughish time in the bush, and were forced to return.

The Matabeles came on again for the third time, but they were plainly disheartened. We could hear the indunas shouting and encouraging their men to come on, but they were evidently, in the language of the Cape, "dead off!" They had had a taste of the Maxims, they had witnessed

the effect of the fire on their companions, and they knew there was but small chance of passing through that hailstorm of lead without being hit, and so they were "not taking any more, thank you"—small blame to them!

These guns are of such a formidable character that I am quite certain no army could possibly stand against them for any length of time, provided they are kept in good serviceable condition and that the supply of ammunition, which must be of the proper sort, holds out. They require an immense quantity of ammunition to keep them going at "full steam."

But the ease with which the range can be found, and their "sweep," make it impossible for any troops to stand up before them for long. To listen to their continuous rattle and to know that each "tut-tut" represents a bullet, at the rate of from two to three hundred a minute, is quite enough to unnerve much stronger-minded men

than savages, who regard everything which they do not understand as "umtagati" (witchcraft). A man who was outside the laager attending to a wounded Mashona, and had a Maxim playing over his head, described it as being "distinctly jumpy." The poor ignorant natives, on hearing the explosion in mid-air of the socket-rockets, and on seeing the sparks falling, were led in their ignorance to believe that the stars were coming down to inform the white men of their locality. When they saw us flashing with the heliograph, they imagined that we were holding some sort of conversation with our God in a language known only to Himself and the white man. What puzzled them most, perhaps, were the shells from the 7-pounders. When referring to shrapnell, they wanted to know "how we managed to wrap up our bullets in a blanket and throw it at them," when we were out of range of their guns. They used to call

common shells "by-and-byes," because they could see the smoke, and by-and-by a shell would explode in their midst before they heard the report of the cannon from which it had been discharged.

I am distinctly of the opinion that the "moral effect" of Maxims and machine guns alike acted as powerfully in repelling the attack—or perhaps it would be better to say, in preventing the enemy from coming on—as in their actual death-dealing properties, and, in fact, saved countless lives. Some people scoff at this idea, but it is certain that these savages are strangely influenced by their imagination and by their extraordinary dread of witchcraft.

They also had another "moral effect," and that was in giving confidence to the side using them; for it is very questionable whether this small handful of men would have even started against the twenty thousand warriors whom Lobengula

was reported to have ready to attack us, had they not had their Maxim guns, and felt such implicit confidence in the training of the men by Captain Lendy, that every man knew there was but the smallest possible chance of any mishap taking place with these guns.

The Matabeles considered Dr. Jameson to be such a marvellous witch-doctor and rain-maker that he had stopped the rain from coming down until we had got into Buluwayo—the rains being just due. The wonderful continuance of the dry season was indeed a great blessing to us, for trekking in the rain, and sleeping in the open without shelter in all one's wet clothes (although we were fortunately provided with waterproof sheets), and without a dry stick with which to kindle a fire, is apt to upset the most even-tempered individual, besides rendering the veldt soft and difficult for the oxen, which are also liable to get sore necks from the chafing of the

yokes when it is raining. The dryness of the weather probably helped to keep the sick-list down to such low proportions.

There has been some comment in the press on the report that the Maxims killed and wounded many of our own natives. This was in a great measure owing to their disobedience, for though they were told to come inside the cattle-laager, they preferred to remain in their own little "scherm." Consequently, they were the first to experience the rush of the Matabeles, who had crept up noiselessly and stealthily in the dark; and when they found themselves thus suddenly attacked they ran in straight on to the laager (instead of making a detour round to the flanks, thereby giving the guns an uninterrupted field for fire), and in the darkness, being unable to distinguish friend from foe, our men undoubtedly shot some of them. It was a marvel to me that many more were not hit, and even

more so that our scouts got in unhurt. Probably they escaped by reason of the enemy firing so high that at one time their bullets were coming into our laager from beyond the Salisbury laager; so much so, that we thought this was the result of careless shooting on the part of the Salisbury men, and shouted to them not to shoot us. It is all very well to take your chance of a straight shot from the front, but very few of us bargained to be hit by our friends from behind, while lying down behind a breastwork hastily composed of bags of meal, saddles, and "bully-meat" boxes, which form a better protection than full ammunition or Hotchkiss shells loaded and primed with percussion fuzes.

It may sound like a paradox, but I attribute our success, and the few men killed and wounded on our side, to the arms of precision with which the enemy were equipped. Had they been simply dependent on their assegais and the old

blunderbuss, the story might have been differently told; but having the selfsame arms and ammunition as the white men, they now had a wholly erroneous opinion of their own strength, and considered they were man to man equal to us; they thought that it was the weapon which did the shooting, and forgot the man behind the gun.

Let it not be considered that I am anxious in any way to extol the actions of the persons responsible for supplying these men with advanced fire-arms; far from it. But in this case, being so well equipped, they acquired a false confidence in themselves, and remained at a distance, trusting to their shooting, whereas had they been armed only with the assegai and shield, they would have trusted to cold steel, close quarters, and overwhelming numbers, and consequently we should have had a much harder time of it. It was remarked that

they thoroughly understood the art of "taking cover," and would run from tree to tree, only exposing their heads to fire, and immediately squatting down in complete concealment, either behind a tree-stem or an ant-heap.

Personally, as I have said, I had no quarrel with the Matabeles, and at first was not altogether satisfied as to the justice of the war; but after the Shangani fight, the sights I witnessed stirred every feeling of humanity in my breast, and induced a wild desire to revenge the terrible brutalities which these savages wreaked on their helpless victims.

Defenceless women lay killed, and mutilated in the most loathsome manner, simply because they had attempted to escape from the slavery into which they had been dragged years before. Here a young woman and her baby lay pinned to the ground by an assegai; there a poor little boy, who had tried to hide himself in an

ant-bear hole, with half a dozen wounds in his miserable little black body. Again, another child with his intestines protruding through a cruel gash across his stomach, and still alive—left, by a refinement of cruelty, to linger in torment. Neither old nor young were spared, and the numbers of those so treated were appalling. The Matabele warrior does not appear to care how, or on whom, he "bloods his assegai," so long as it is soaked in human gore; and surely the nation whose budding warriors do not scruple to baptise themselves in the blood of defenceless women and children is best wiped off the earth. I left the laager that day, holding staunchly the opinions of Mr. Labouchere and his supporters, condemnatory of the slaughter of the black man; but a quarter of an hour among such sights as these sufficed to convert me into a zealous advocate for their prompt extermination.

Since returning to England, I have had the opportunity of a conversation with a very influential man in London, and as I waxed excited over the brutality and bloodthirstiness of the Matabeles, and my thankfulness that their power was finally broken, he cautioned me against associating myself too closely with the late Captain Lendy, who had, he said, been classed as a "murderer" (as a matter of fact, he never did anything, poor fellow, but simply obey orders), and that the same epithet might be applied to myself. I replied that my feeling against the Matabeles was so strong, on account of their bloodthirstiness and inhumanity, that were one or all of them in danger of death, I would not lift a finger to save them. It was an ignoble remark to make, and I only mention it to show that if I, who had never suffered personally at their hands, felt thus strongly, what must have been the temper of the men who

great service in completing their rout on the left, after the horsemen had gone out for the second time. On the first occasion they had to return, being very nearly surrounded, and having some difficulty in regaining the laager, fortunately succeeding without mishap.

I have noticed a tendency in a certain class of newspapers to scoff at the small number of casualties on our side as compared with the reported numbers of the enemy killed. These gentlemen who stay at home and enjoy good dinners every evening, seem to have been crying out for more of their fellow-countrymen to be killed; and although they have a great deal to say about "the poor, harmless, inoffensive nigger," and condole with him greatly, strange as it may appear, they seem to have an unsatisfiable thirst for "more white men's blood." Naturally, when a man's sympathies are with savages, we find that a blind and unreasoning jealousy of the men who

are doing work which he dare not do finds vent in a gush of maudlin claptrap and an assumed championship of his counterpart, "the nigger."

It is one thing to help the weaker side against the stronger—we all admire that spirit; it is quite another to stand up for those savage and inhuman races of men which are bound by every natural law to go under, before the inevitable forward-sweeping wave of civilisation. Certainly the savages are not helped by indiscriminate vilification of that wave. Surely when it becomes a case of colour against colour, white *versus* black, those who have the proud distinction of belonging to the former, the most advanced and cultured of the races of the world, should stick up for their own race, especially if they are Britons, and it is Britons who are fighting.

After the battle, we found that the enemy had managed to recapture or frighten away some five hundred of the seven hundred head of cattle

previously captured by us. Those remaining we collected, and, together with our trek-oxen, sent to graze. Of course the doctors, noticeably Dr. Hogg, had a very busy time, and were glad to have the ready assistance of several men who had at one time studied for the medical profession.

The position of our laagers during this fight was a curious one to take up, commanded as we were by hills on the front, and on the right and left flanks, while thick bush surrounded us on every side. It was known that the enemy were about, for we had seen many of them during the day, and had we "trekked" a mile or two farther we could have found a splendid open spot whereon to laager. This we did next day. It was a fortunate occurrence for us that, owing to the absence of a patrol in the evening, rockets were fired from the laager to guide them to our position, as this circumstance caused the enemy

to delay their attack—originally intended to be delivered about ten o'clock—until the early morning, when the Impi, who was late in arriving at the "rendezvous," had appeared. It was also very lucky for us that we had not got to fight with them, concealed in the bush in the dark, for longer than we did.

CHAPTER XI

The March resumed—Captain Williams missing—Arrival of Lieutenant Hurrell with Despatches—Enxna Kraal shelled and burnt—Battle of the 'Imbembesi—The Enemy defeated—Cowardice of the Young Warriors—Pluck of the Older Men—Progress resumed—Buluwayo in Flames—We enter the Town.

ORDERS were given to march in the afternoon, and the scouts having reported the country all round to be clear, we inspanned and went forward for a couple of miles, a Maxim gun and a mounted troop being posted on the small hill to cover our advance through the defile.

We presently arrived at a nice open spot, where we formed our two laagers side by side, with the cattle in a bush kraal between, the Mashonas taking good care to be inside the cattle "scherm"

this time. No more "dossing out on the veldt" for them! All the wounded who could be so treated were placed on the wagons, the others being carried on stretchers. We had great difficulty in many cases to induce the Mashonas to carry their own friends.

"What's the good?" they said. "They no good, no hand for fight!" "Leave him; let him die!" and so forth. The wounded natives were also in some cases so afraid that their friends acting in the capacity of bearers would drop them that they positively refused to be moved. In one case a man who had been told off to carry a small boy was observed to put him down again, being much more anxious to carry his bundle of filthy rags and a few old goat-skins than the poor little sufferer. He was, however, speedily compelled to bring along his human load. These incidents show in what light esteem they hold human life; the struggle for

existence is so hard that every man looks first to himself, and thinks of nothing else.

The next few days passed uneventfully, after the excitement of the Shangani battle. A few shots were exchanged daily, and we were on a couple of occasions compelled to laager up in readiness for an attack; but with the aid of the mounted men who went out to their assistance, the flanking parties managed to beat off the enemy, and after a short delay the columns were enabled to resume their march.

It may be worth mentioning here, as showing the excellent manner in which Capt. Argent Kirton had trained his transport, that, on one of these occasions, when we suddenly got the order to "form laager," in exactly four minutes from the time of the order the wagons were in formation, every man in his place, and the bush cut down for about thirty yards. He was most careful always to be ready to start with the

Victoria Column punctually at the hour ordered (we very frequently had to wait, but we were always ready in time); and while marching, in two double columns, if anything went wrong in rear, the column was halted until the offending wagon was ready to start again; thus there was no breach in the column nor delay in bringing the wagons into position in the laager.

On the night of the 26th, when we were in laager on the site of an old kraal, we were for the first time without water. We managed to pull through—an issue of "dop" (the usual name for Cape brandy if I remember rightly), helping to make our lot more tolerable. Few, however, were thinking about themselves, all thoughts being turned towards Captain Williams, whose horse had bolted with him amongst the Kaffirs early in the day—the few men with him having all their time cut out to look after their own skins. Rockets were fired,

in the hope of assisting him to find the laager ; but alas! he was never seen again, although several search-parties were sent out, and, in addition, after reaching water, we remained for a day to give him a chance of rejoining the Columns if he were still alive.

On the 27th Lieut. Hurrell from Victoria, in company with a young Dutchman, arrived at the camp, having undertaken the ride with an important despatch from that place for the doctor, a distance of some hundred and fifty miles, through a country reported to be infested with the enemy. I consider this to be one of the pluckiest actions of the campaign, as they could not tell where we might be, nor even whether we still existed. Lieut. Hurrell calculated whereabouts we ought to be if everything had gone satisfactorily, and rode until he struck our spoor near the scene of the recent conflict on the Shangani. He then saw that we had

come into contact with the enemy, but as our tracks showed that we had still proceeded westward, he judged very correctly that, as our American friends would say, we were still "O. K." He told us he had heard the explosion of some of the rockets during the preceding night, when yet some twenty-five miles away. Both Lieut. Hurrell and his companion (the latter riding the old racehorse called "Raft"), brought copies of the despatch, so that in case of an accident happening to one of them, the other would be able to deliver the copy he himself carried; and a native had also been given a copy with great promises of reward if he got through with and delivered it; but his heart must have failed him, for he never turned up, although he started with a large contingent at his back. That same evening Mr. Dunn and a comrade came in with despatches from Salisbury.

On the 28th, while halted, a patrol went out

to look for Williams, and, finding his horse's spoor, followed it for fifteen miles, but as they saw no signs of their missing comrade, and it was

SEVEN-POUNDER IN SCOTCH-CART.

growing late, very reluctantly they were obliged to return. During the day it was decided to shell and burn the large military kraal of Enxna, about five miles off, and Captain Lendy

took the 7-pounder in a small Scotch-cart, being supported by a troop of twenty volunteers under Captain Heany. The gun opened fire with a few well-directed shots, while some of the mounted men proceeded round the kraal on both sides, and succeeded in firing the huts. In the meantime, the rest of the party kept a sharp look-out, and it was lucky they did so, as they were only just in time to warn their comrades and get away when the enemy came pouring out of the bush in an attempt to cut off the little party that had so daringly destroyed the kraal of the impudent induna who had defied Dr. Jameson at Victoria in July.

On this particular afternoon one of the funniest incidents occurred which it has been my lot to witness. A party of natives, who had been sent to one of the several small kraals and cattle-posts in the vicinity of the camp to fetch mealies for the horses, returned; but although we had seen

they were heavily loaded, they yet produced no mealies for the horses. This was accounted for thus: finding plenty of monkey-nuts, they had been unable to resist the temptation and had loaded up with large quantities of this very appetising food for themselves, utterly regardless of our horses. On their return, however, there was a Nemesis awaiting them; they were marshalled in line, and ordered to sit down with their calabashes, while Mr. "Makaberí," who was regarded by them as the most powerful white man extant, compelled every man to exhibit the contents of his calabash, which, if found to contain monkey-nuts, was promptly broken over his head, while the nuts rolled in every direction. There the delinquents squatted in a perfect sea of contraband monkey-nuts, grinning, chattering, each thoroughly enjoying the discomfort of the others, and perfectly happy; they knew that if discovered they would have to make another

journey to fetch the mealies, but they preferred to bring back a luxury for themselves, in the vain hope that it would not be noticed. The horses might starve for all they cared. If they had brought us mealies, not a word would have been said about their getting monkey-nuts for themselves afterwards; and this was strange, as they had plenty of meat—in fact, they had never fared so well in their lives before, nor were they likely ever to have such a "good time" again.

On the following day we accomplished two good treks, and arrived on an open stretch of country from whence we expected to reach Buluwayo in a few days. Lieut. Hurrell took "John Selous"—one of the boys who had accompanied this famous hunter and traveller for many years—and started on his return to Fort Victoria, hoping to find and assist Captain Williams; but, as has since become known, he was too late to be able to render him

any aid, for after his horse knocked up, he was overtaken by his pursuers and shot—but not before he had rendered a good account of himself by causing a few of them to "lose the number of their mess."

We kept in a very open, undulating country for the next two days, doing nothing very interesting, except burning a few kraals we came across on the way, and shelling a kopje or two when we noticed parties of the enemy on the look-out for us.

We were expecting an attack every night now, and had to "stand to arms" at our respective posts until a very late hour, and again for a couple of hours before daybreak. This latter was very miserable work, for in the early morning it was far from warm, and few men would then feel in the best of spirits; but in the evenings, when standing to arms, each man would produce the choicest and most select

story he had in répertoire. Nothing, however, happened until the 1st of November, when our route led through a belt of very thick bush, and, our scouts reporting large bodies of the enemy on the right in very dense bush, we altered our direction a little to the left, and, getting out into the open, laagered up on a rise of ground close to a small kraal. The horses and oxen were turned out to graze in a little gulley where there was plenty of sweet grass and water—possibly the head waters of the Umsabetsi River, which flows to the left, the 'Imbembezi going to the right. In front of us, about ten miles distant, we could see the Tabas Induna with its two conical kopjes on either side, behind which we knew Buluwayo lay. It is so named as being the scene of the great slaughter of indunas by Umziligazi on his return from the Zambesi, as narrated in a previous chapter.

The vedettes were posted, we had lighted

our fires and were preparing to enjoy our breakfast, when the Matabeles were reported crossing the ridge on the right front of the Salisbury laager, whereupon Major Forbes fired a couple of 7-pounder shrapnel shells at a long range. Major Wilson, remarking, "We may as well play with our 7-pounder," ordered it to be brought out; and it was not long in coming into action. After a few rounds we suddenly noticed the niggers running through the bush in large numbers on our right. The "Alarm" was sounded, and the guns brought back to laager; but already the Maxims had begun to tune up, and a hard time of it they presently had. The brunt of the attack was borne by the right rear of the Salisbury laager, where the bullets were coming along pretty merrily, and several poor fellows were hit; but the enemy were unable to face our leaden hail from Maxims, Nordenfeldt, and Gardner, while the Hotchkiss kept dropping shell after shell

right into their midst as they lay in the thick bush. We could not all fire with effect from the wagons, so Major Wilson ordered some of us to come outside and line the ridge to our front, and endeavour to prevent the enemy from encircling us, as they were trying to do, and at the same time cut off our horses, which were stampeding away up the gully. Thereupon, he ordered any of us who could to get hold of the first horses we could find, and go out and try to turn them back. Some half-dozen of us went out; but the niggers, in their eagerness to kill the white men's horses, had shot a couple of the leading ones, and thus the troop turning back, we were able to recover nearly all. We also got in all the oxen, and most of the sheep and goats.

During this time, the continued fire from the laager had been too much for the king's crack regiments, and they were obliged to retire; the

dismounted troop, under Capt. Delamere and Lieut. Steer, following them up and completing the rout. In the thick bush some close

VELDT.

hand-to-hand fighting took place, and they returned amid the cheers of every one in the two laagers, bringing with them thirteen Martini-Henry rifles, some sporting M-H's and Win-

chester repeating guns, as well as ammunition and assegais. The enemy appear to have possessed guns of every sort and kind, from the old "Tower" musket and big Elephant guns, to the new ·303 military rifle; we found numerous cartridges for this, the very latest type of rifle, when we entered Buluwayo. It would be interesting to know how Lobengula became possessor of, and who supplied him with, these guns and cartridges.

Captain Bastard's troop went out to the right front, and while endeavouring to draw the enemy from the bush, they had a very warm time of it, but, retiring in good order, accomplished what they had gone out to do, *viz.*, draw the enemy from the bush. For the Matabeles swallowed the bait so carefully laid, and came after them into the open; but when they found shrapnels bursting amongst them, they opined that they had better cease following the troop, and see what

was in the bush on the other side of the ridge. Captain Bastard's horse was wounded in two places, and many of his men had narrow escapes, one having the sling of his rifle cut in two by a bullet. When I remarked that it was a "close shave," he said, "Begorra, yer 'onor, an' if they niver come closer nor that, it's mesilf that won't moind!"

We remained on the spot over night, and in order better to protect the laagers, Major Forbes and Captain Lendy placed barbed wire stretched among the trees in our rear to check any sudden rush during the hours of darkness. The sentries and pickets noticed firebrands moving about in the bush all night, where the enemy were seeking their killed and wounded. We afterwards heard that many of their young warriors, who had expressed such eagerness to "wipe out the white man," had fled up into the trees during the action, trusting thereby to escape

from the deadly fire of the "cock-ock," as they called the Maxims! There was one man for whom I think every one was sorry, his conduct *was* so plucky. He came out alone from the edge of the bush—at that point about three hundred yards from the laager—and, running the gauntlet of two Maxims, a Nordenfeld, and a Gardner, took advantage of ant-heaps, stumps of trees, and every bit of cover, ever and anon advancing, firing away as steadily as possible, until he was eventually bowled over not more than some seventy yards away. He was a splendidly made man, well over six feet in height, and with an enormous head. I am sorry to be unable to pay so plucky a fellow the posthumous compliment of presenting his portrait to my readers; but owing probably to some negligence on my part, it chanced to be one of the few failures that I had with my Kodak.

There were several other instances of individual

courage, from which it would be ungenerous to withhold a tribute of praise; but it was noticeable that those who thus distinguished themselves were as a rule rather oldish men, being the same who had counselled their king *not* to fight the white man. The younger warriors were, on the contrary, eager for blood, but when it came to the pinch, failed to exhibit the same readiness to spill their own.

In this fight we lost one man and had eight wounded, three of whom subsequently died; we judged the enemy's loss to be about four hundred killed and wounded. The Mashonas were untouched, remaining huddled up in a heap together, inside the cattle kraal the whole time, and it was with difficulty they were persuaded, even after the field was clear of the enemy, to go out and collect fuel and bring up water.

There were about seven or eight thousand Matabeles engaged, among whom were the king's

crack regiments, the "Imbezu" and "Inguba," which he thought were invincible. One of their indunas, who had been captured and was being escorted to the laager by a young, clean-shaven fellow, bitterly exclaimed, "And to think that we have been beaten by a lot of boys!" Poor old chap, who had never previously experienced "defeat," he must indeed have felt his ignominious position. For undoubtedly these men have a large feeling of pride both for themselves and in their nation; and formerly their overbearing manner was very galling to both traders and hunters in their country.

The extreme youth of the average number of men composing the force was very remarkable, and I very much doubt if a venture such as this was ever previously carried to such a successful issue under such young leaders; so it is all the more credit to them for what they accomplished.

When we marched next morning, Major Forbes

less, aged, or infirm, who were not allowed to be deserted. "These old women," they said, "are no good for wives; they can't carry water. Why not leave them?" Nevertheless, they always treated with kindness those that we entrusted to their care. Never shall I forget the sight of a black woman trying to comfort an unfortunate little girl who was suffering agony from a cruel assegai wound; the girl was sitting in the lap of one woman, and sobbing, crying, and moaning, as though her poor little heart must break, while another woman was doing her best to persuade the wretched little sufferer to partake of a huge piece of barely half-cooked meat, part of which she herself was eating. It was very evidently meant in the kindest possible of spirits, but to me it seemed a very odd way of expressing sympathy and attempting to relieve pain. These blacks possess wonderful vitality; one who had had his arm taken off above the elbow after the

Shangani fight, walked cheerfully along, carrying his goatskin and so forth, on the second day after the amputation.

Messrs. Burnham, Ingram, and Vavasour (who had been formerly at Buluwayo and knew the country), went on ahead to discover what was transpiring in the enemy's camp, and to obtain, if possible, tidings of Goold-Adams' Column, with which by this time we had expected to be in touch. They returned on November 3rd with the news that Buluwayo was in flames and deserted, but that two white residents there, Messrs. Fairbairn and Usher, were safe and unharmed on the roof of their store. We then knew that the explosion we had heard, and the heavy column of smoke we could see, signified that Lobengula's brick-built house, where his powder and ammunition were stored, had blown up. We heard two more very loud explosions during the night as we lay in our laagers.

Captain White's scouts had a very sharp engagement with the enemy on the northern side of the Tabas Induna, but, luckily, our scouts suffered no casualties. The king and his followers had unfortunately succeeded in getting safely away to the other side of the Indunas' hill with their cattle, and were there out of reach of the "by-and-byes."

Captain Borrow and his troops went forward and occupied Buluwayo, and at 2 p.m. on November 4th the victorious Mashonalanders marched into the town, their wagons decorated with whatever handkerchiefs, or other articles capable of being stitched into some resemblance to a flag, might be obtained; Pipe-Major McDonald, of Captain Delamere's "Foot-sloggers," blowing the "Buluwayo March" lustily on his beloved bag-pipes, on which he boasted of having often performed for the delectation of the Duke of Fife, who is one of the directors of the Chartered Company.

CHAPTER XII

Arrival of the Tati Columns—Start of Patrol to capture Lobengula—Night-marching—Inyati Mission Station—News of the King—Am sent back from the Bubyé with despatches to Buluwayo—I take the Mails to Palapye—Meet Hon. Cecil Rhodes—Visit Khama—The Rains—Mafeking—The journey from Vrÿburg to Cape Town—Sir H. Loch—Return to England.

AFTER we had entered the town of Buluwayo, Messrs. Burnham and Ingram rode down to Tati with despatches and telegrams, and after a few days we found ourselves in communication with the Goold-Adams Column, which was still several days' march away from Buluwayo. We formed our laagers round the sides of Mr. Collenbrander's hut, which was temporarily converted into a hospital and made as comfortable as possible under the circumstances

for the sick and wounded. The stores remaining in Messrs. Usher and Fairbairn's "store" were "commandeered" by Dr. Jameson on

MAJOR FORBES AND STAFF, BULUWAYO.

behalf of the Company, for the use of the hospital, and in order to provide new clothes for the men, many of whom were in very sore need thereof. The remainder of the goods,

these wants having been supplied, were sold at public auction by the owners, many of the articles fetching very high prices; for instance, salt pork brought ten shillings a pound; tobacco, twelve-and-six a pound; small bottles of Worcester sauce, four shillings; and of pickles, nine shillings, etc., etc. The store was besieged all day long, and Messrs. "Matabele" Wilson and Accutt having discharged their duties as guides, now busied themselves in assisting their former friends and partners to supply the needs of those soldiers whose scanty kits needed replenishing; so that, presently, what with new hats, blue trousers, and pink shirts, we could hardly recognise each other.

The kraal itself was not neglected, and yielded spoils in the shape of assegais, shields, carved wooden bowls, ostrich-feather head-dresses and capes, swords, bullet-moulds, and cartridges, the latter bearing very circumstantial evidence of the class of arms they were using. They had

also been very busily employed in making shields and repairing guns, as was testified by the signs of work which had been going on in those huts which were not absolutely destroyed by fire. The large silver elephant presented to Lobengula by the Tati Company was found in the ruins of the king's house and raffled; but I don't know who won it.

As all the wagons were now safe at their destination, when it was heard that Col. Goold-Adams' oxen were knocked up, a number of our animals were sent down to help the Column along on their way to Buluwayo, and in the meanwhile Dr. Jameson decided to send a message to the king, asking him to come in and see him, and let the war cease. Two Britishers volunteered to take the message, but the doctor deemed it better to send colonials, who returned with an evasive answer from the wily old statesman, accepting the invitation; but as he did not fulfil his engage-

ment it became incumbent on us to go forth and bring him in willy-nilly. A Union Jack, surcharged with the yellow lion of the B. S. A. Company was placed on a pole fixed to the top of a tree alongside the headquarters, and proclaimed Britain's protection over the country where but a few weeks ago Lobengula had held absolute despotic sway.

By this time the Tati Columns were approaching Buluwayo, and we expected to hear of their arrival almost every day. A look-out tower was erected at the corner of the laager, on which a Maxim was mounted. A fort, originally designed to be pentagon-shaped, but afterwards altered to a quadrangle, was commenced, and the work went merrily forward. We varied our amusements by trying to erect shelters, with the assistance of the roofs from the huts in the kraal transported bodily on Kaffirs' heads, in which to rest after our spells of digging at the fort; but they were

promptly blown down and smothered in the ubiquitous red dust which an occasional shower would convert into a miniature sea of mud. A shooting-match was also arranged, in which the Salisbury men "knocked spots out of" the Victorias.

I might mention here that it was hoped that we should have started some days earlier on this patrol, but as it was suggested that it was preferable to wait until "Raaff's Rangers" had arrived, the general feeling among the men was probed, and the majority seemed desirous of waiting. This struck me as very curious. I suppose it was on account of their being "volunteers"; for when there was anything to be done, beyond ordinary routine, the men were never "ordered" to go, but were called upon "to volunteer." It did not seem to make any practical difference, for on these occasions there were generally more volunteered than would be required.

Meanwhile, our horses were resting, and we only awaited the arrival of Commandant Raaff and his men to start in pursuit of the king.

On the 14th of November, amid a blinding dust-storm, they arrived, all looking well, and with horses that compared most favourably with our own, and were greeted by prolonged cheers from everybody. Many an old friendship was renewed and many an unexpected hand-shake exchanged under the ruins of Buluwayo Kraal.

At seven o'clock the volunteers from Major Wilson's and Major Forbes' Columns started in company with those under the command of Commandant Raaff and Capt. Coventry, B. B. P., to try and finish the business. We took three-and-a-half days' rations and hoped to return in four days, accompanied by the king. A trying march in the dark through the bush brought us to a point a mile or so beyond Tabas Induna, and a halt was called about midnight. We "off-saddled,"

"ringed" our horses, and lay down in front of them in a square behind our saddles; and, as no one molested us, we enjoyed a dip in the river next morning. Two kraals in the vicinity supplied us with sufficient Kaffir-corn and mealies to enable all our horses to enjoy a really good square meal, and making a start about mid-day, we passed the hill (Tabas Imfazimeta) where Umziligasi (according to one story as I heard it, but for the truth of which I do not wish to vouch) once slaughtered some hundreds of women, who were about to become mothers. We arrived at the Induba Military Kraal, only to find it deserted. We found here, however, a stock of fine, clean mealies, which were hugely relished by the horses during an hour-long halt.

Heavy rain had commenced, but we pressed on until about eight o'clock, most of us soaked to the skin by a regular deluge, through belts of thick bush, alternating with strips of open country;

when, reaching water, we "off-saddled," "ringing" our horses as on the former occasion, by passing the reins of one through the head-collar of the next, and eventually succeeded in lighting a few fires whereon to boil water for a certain number of "billies" of tea, and beside which to lie down until midnight, when we started again.

We pursued our way in absolute silence to within two miles of Inyati Mission Station, beyond which we understood the king to be located. As it wanted yet an hour ere there would be light enough to do anything, we formed a square, dismounted, and stood by our horses, being unable even to smoke, for fear some wary scout should discover our whereabouts by the striking of a match.

As soon as it became light enough to see, we advanced; Salisbury Contingent spreading out to the right, Victoria to the left, Maxims in the centre, and Commandant Raaff's Contingent

going off beyond to the left to act in support of the advance. While moving forward I noticed pieces of pictures and photographs, torn and destroyed, littering the path; but hearing a few shots away to the left, every one jumped from his horse, putting a cartridge into his gun, and expecting the fun to begin. In the grey dawn, dusky figures were discerned flitting about in the bush, and some one with keener eyes for beauty than the rest shouted "Women!" As the light grew stronger we found this to be the case; they had been completely surprised, and fled away in all directions, the men driving off the herds hastily on the other side of the kopje, throwing away their shields as they ran. This was very unusual, as they generally stick to them until they are killed, but this morning we had so completely surprised them by suddenly appearing in their midst, when they imagined we were not within forty miles of

the place, that I suppose they lost their heads, and thought only of saving their own skins and the cattle. On arriving at the "scherm" it is needless to say we did not find the king, and were compelled to turn our attention to collecting as many of the scattered cattle as possible; during which operation Mr. Collenbrander had a narrow escape from a Matabele, who rushed out on him from behind a tree where he was hiding, and attempted to assegai him. Altogether, we managed to collect a couple of thousand head of cattle, and drove them into the Mission Station, where the most distressing scene of wreck, pillage, and wanton destruction of useful and valuable property, met our eyes. The books, papers and tools of all descriptions, which were the property of the missionaries, Messrs. Rees and Elliott, who had made this spot their home for many years, lay scattered about in every direction. Every pane of glass in the house was broken, and the

American organ was smashed up—evidently to find out whence the sounds proceeded. Medicines which might have been of invaluable service to us had been poured on the ground, while undoubtedly the ripping open of feather pillows had afforded the "niggers" much satisfaction, for their contents were scattered broadcast over the whole place.

It was sad to see the books, many of them valuable ones, torn and destroyed, more especially as in a country like this libraries are not to be found at every turning, and the railway bookstall has not yet found its way; but we were thankful the houses had not been burnt, as they afforded us comfortable shelter from the heat of the sun.

The women whom we had seen were brought in and questioned as to the whereabouts of the king. Their stories were found to tally with those of the men who had been captured, ar

were to the effect that Lobengula was about forty miles away on the Bubyé River, going northward, his oxen thoroughly "done up," and his unwieldy Majesty, who was suffering from gout, being dragged in his wagon by some faithful followers. After the king had left Buluwayo he sent back to Mr. Fairbairn and asked him to give him a bottle of Elliman's embrocation, which was his specific against gout; we presumed that by this time he must have finished the bottle, as he was ill again. The captives warned us to take their information *cum grano salis*, as although they understood it to be true, they were often purposely misled by the men to prevent their giving us correct information in the event of any of them falling into our hands. These warriors were so chivalrous that, when set at liberty, they did not hesitate to clear off and save their own skins, without caring what became of the women and children!

The women, moreover, told us that they were heartily sick of living in the bush, and expressed a strong wish that the war should cease, and that they might return peacefully to their kraals. So we sent them away, with instructions to tell their male friends that, provided they came in and gave up their arms, they might go about their business unharmed, if also un-armed. Profiting by this information some few came in, and, surrendering their weapons, were dismissed to follow their own devices.

On the evening of the 17th we again started in pursuit of the king, leaving a hundred men, under Captain Fitzgerald, with a Maxim and a 7-pounder, at Inyati. We passed through some exceedingly thick bush, where we should have had a most uncomfortable time of it if we had been attacked, and about midnight arrived at a small kraal, where, bringing our horses inside, we slept, the sentries keeping an extra sharp

some one about who could see any one approaching and attempting to steal it, and at night the noise the cattle would make, when disturbed, would be certain to arouse some one, and give the alarm.

Next morning we started again, and presently came to a large open plain near a big kraal, where were plenty of cattle and many niggers; the latter, evidently not expecting us, were so surprised that they took to their heels, and, having a long start of their pursuers, there were some exciting races to reach the bush. Many men were caught and brought back to give information, but being released, left us, none the worse for their brief detention, save that their weapons remained in our possession—that is, unless the consciences of those who told lies pained them afterwards, which is extremely doubtful. Some of these niggers went so far as to feign ignorance of the fact that their king was at war with the white men.

We made ourselves as snug as possible in the kraal during the day, while waiting an answer from the king to the invitation requesting "the pleasure of his company," and in the evening we saddled up and formed a square "scherm" of bush on a rising piece of ground in the open, about a mile away, where we endeavoured to make ourselves as comfortable as the circumstances and the rain would permit. We had now been out for six days on very meagre three-and-a-half days' rations, and it would take another three days to return to Buluwayo and get further provisions for a more protracted sojourn in the bush. Moreover, if we went farther in pursuit of the king now, we might find ourselves in places where it would be impossible to obtain even the Kaffir-corn that we were at this time using as our staple food. So Major Forbes, on the following day, sent me back with a despatch to Dr. Jameson, and in-

tended falling back with the rest of the column on Shiloh, there to await the wagons of provisions which the doctor would send up, when he would re-victual, and resume the chase.

During this ride, at one place, shortly before we reached the thick belt of bush near Inyati, I noticed many large birds on the ground, and went a considerable distance out of my way to see what they were. I found them to be a species of crane—similar to those which upon the west coast we used to call bugle-birds (*Balearica Chrysopelargus*); they were busily employed in picking up and devouring a large *trek* of locusts, which were in that stage when they are termed "foot-kongers"—*i.e.*, before their wings are developed, and when their only means of locomotion is by foot, on the ground. Much damage may be saved if opportunity serves by destroying them at this stage, before they grow

bigger, and require more food. Upon nearing Mafeking in the early morning, we saw a black patch on the veldt, which looked as if it had been burnt, but which turned out upon inspection to be a huge trek of foot-kongers. If the coach had not stopped, and I had not seen these insects with my own eyes, I could not have believed it possible for so many to be collected together in one spot; they were stiff and cold after a night's halt, but when the sun comes out and warms them, onward move the dense phalanxes of locusts pushing ever forwards, no obstacle stopping them. On they *must* move, even if it be over the dead bodies of those composing the foremost ranks, while behind them lies a barren track, eaten bare of every vestige of vegetation. No wonder that the inhabitants look upon them as a scourge. It seems passing strange that no one has ever yet been able to cope with these plagues, which not only affect

North and South Africa, but other parts of the world also, such as New Zealand.

I reached Inyati that evening, and Captain Fitzgerald supplied me with a fresh mount, as we feared the horse I had might not have stood the remainder of the journey to Buluwayo; but my companion, Mr. Postle, being too ill to go on, I left him at Inyati, where he could get more care and rest, which were most essential for his recovery. Lieutenant Dollar, of the Scouts (who was "saddled up" and about to start for Buluwayo when we arrived), accompanied me, and together we arrived at Buluwayo at noon next day, where I reported myself to Dr. Jameson and delivered to him the despatches entrusted to my care.

With Dr. Jameson I found Col. Goold-Adams, and Mr. F. C. Selous, the latter of whom had been wounded in the fight with Gambo's Impis, and it was cheering news to hear that he was getting better; but I also learnt with deep sorrow

and regret that young Rixon—who had been suffering from dysentery for many days—had died in the hospital. I was especially sorry for his brother, who was one of the members of our (artillery) mess, and consequently we had become very intimate.

The sensation of riding along in the moonlight night, not saying a word, and hearing no sounds, was at first very strange. When it grew too dark to see our track, we turned off into the veldt for some distance, into a klompje of thick bush, and then, off-saddling, gave our horses a feed of mealies, and lying down by them slept serenely till the first streak of daylight, when we gave them another feed, and thus lightened our saddles to a considerable extent. How I longed for a smoke! but at night we deemed it advisable not to make more noise than we could help, nor do anything, such as striking a match, which might attract the attention of any Mata-

beles who might be near. I daresay it was lucky we did so, for although we did not meet any one on the road down, yet when it became light we noticed the spoor of large numbers of Kaffirs, crossing ours, all going northwards; we also observed the spoor of several horses, and guessed they were mounted indunas, and that this was Gambo's Impis, who had been defeated by the Tuli Column, and were now endeavouring to join the king.

Col. Goold-Adams had made good use of the time since his arrival at Buluwayo, for we noticed that the whole camp had assumed a more cleanly and business-like appearance since our departure, and was now in a much more sanitary condition. Care was being taken to burn the carcasses of all the numerous dead oxen and horses which had formerly been lying around in an indiscriminate manner, tending to affect the health of the troops; and strict sanitary

regulations were being enforced among the natives.

The fort, which we had commenced prior to starting on the patrol, was now almost complete, and the Bechuanaland Border Police had arrived, and were encamped near our laager. On entering one of their bell-tents (the sight of which forcibly reminded me that I was with imperial troops), I was pleased to meet again that well-known gentleman, Mr. "Ikey" Sonnenberg, who was reporting for the press at the Cape and other places.

During the night a tremendous dust-storm came up, and simultaneously the "alarm" was sounded. It turned out to be a false alarm, but it was the cause of my losing many interesting photographs which I should have liked to include among those which have been reproduced; for I was in a wagon at the time of the sounding of the "alarm," busily employed in changing the

roll of films, and I had to leave them wrapped up in a red handkerchief out in the wagon, exposed, until after the "dismiss" had sounded.

We must congratulate the columns generally on the remarkably few occasions upon which false alarms were given. This was in a great measure owing to the precautions taken by our commander, for after a sentry had one night let off his rifle by accident, he issued orders that sentries were never to have their rifles loaded at night, but always to keep the breech open, and carry a cartridge in their hand ready to slip in at any moment. I only heard of one case of a sentry "sleeping on his post," but the man who committed this, the most serious and unpardonable of all crimes in time of war, was a fellow (half German, I believe, and one consequently who ought to have known better) never more than half awake at the best of times. The men were very naturally exceedingly annoyed with

him, as all knew that their safety depended upon the sentries giving timely warning of the approach of the enemy. I was given to understand that this man was punished by having part of his farm forfeited. But this is a digression.

Dr. Jameson at once despatched three hundred men and wagons with provisions to meet Major Forbes at Shiloh; and as he said, "The whole affair is now practically over, and so you had better go home and rejoin your corps," he sent me down with the mails and despatches for Cape Town on the same day.

In company with Trooper Mitchell, B.B.P., and a little chestnut bag-of-bones, with huge sores on its withers and elsewhere, out of courtesy called a "horse," to carry the mails, whose first performance was to get loose and gallop away back to camp, we pushed along as fast as we could, passing, near Mangwe, the first convoy of wagons going north. We met with

many incidents of a more or less amusing character, which tended to relieve the monotony of this hundred and fifty mile ride on very weak and miserable horses, which required much nursing in order to bring them in alive into Tati; and on arrival, during the night of November 23rd, I reported myself to Major Lindsell (late R. S. Fusiliers), the newly arrived Resident Magistrate.

We passed through the Nek, a narrow pass some twenty miles long, winding along between castellated granite kopjes—a very nasty place for a convoy of wagons to be attacked in. We were fortunate in riding through by daylight, as it was most picturesque and interesting; and, moreover, we saw the "scherm," perfectly concealed in a hollow at the southern end, wherein Gambo's Impis had encamped while waiting to attack Col. Goold-Adams. These "scherms" were well and strongly built, their interiors being neatly and symmetrically arranged, and con-

structed of branches and grass closely woven together, with logs of wood carefully placed all along, whereon the dusky warriors might pillow their heads while awaiting the arrival of the Tuli Column, while the smaller "scherms" in front were undoubtedly set apart for the indunas. The Matabeles had evidently lain in wait there for some considerable time, judging by the remains of the slaughtered oxen. We passed many stray oxen and horses wandering about by themselves, and saw also some Kaffirs, who carried little pieces of white "limbo" on sticks to show they were friendly. No one molested us, although one man came and requested us to come up to his village, where all his people were collected, and anxious to have a talk with us.

At Tati I was hospitably received by the Tati Company, and as the mail cart was not expected for a week or so, I undertook to ride the mails through to Palapye. Where I arrived on the

morning of the 27th, in company with Mr. Giesé, a gentleman who had recently returned from the Victoria Falls.

During the journey down from Tati, we met several detachments of the Bechuanaland Border Police, and Volunteers from the regiments stationed at Cape Town, going up, all very anxious to be in time, and not at all appreciating it when I told them, in the words of Dr. Jameson, that it was "all over"; and I fear many of them were still farther disappointed, for they did not receive the medal which was expected. One man remarked to me, "Anyhow, we'll be in time for the medal?"

"Honours," as they are termed, in the shape of decorations, were not to be distributed to the men who had done the work by the country whose dominions they had increased. Even the patient, clear-headed master-hand, who had brought the Chartered Company's forces into

Buluwayo, and, with the assistance of seven hundred men, had broken for ever the strong military organisation of the Matabele nation—a task which an old and experienced officer had once declared "was impossible with seven thousand well-armed and thoroughly trained troops";—what does he get? Nothing! Dr. Jameson, if any man, surely deserves some sort of recognition for the part he took in the affair, in bringing it to a successful issue.

Honours! Is it not honour enough for us to have had the privilege of serving under a man like the late Major Wilson? Every man in the Victoria Column, I will answer for it, was satisfied with that as a sufficient honour. And to have been numbered among that band of heroes who died shoulder to shoulder together with him, on the Shangani River, is to have a name handed down to posterity, at the mention of which every true man's blood will tingle in his veins.

For us it is honour enough to know that we belong to the same nation as those heroes.

At Macloutsie Drift, where we arrived early in the morning, we found several Dutch families encamped, having come there to be out of the way of the Matabeles. They were very hospitable, regaling us with cup after cup of coffee, and one lady, who had offered us a sumptuous breakfast, laid out in a tent of scrupulous cleanliness, was, I fear, rather annoyed because I could not manage to drink a second huge mug of milk.

At this place, my horse looking seedy and miserable, and not appearing capable of carrying himself and me on to Palapye, I obtained another horse which Capt. White had left behind for the Hon. Maurice Gifford to pick up on his return. I was soon afterwards enabled to "swap" this horse—which was but little better than my own—with Captain Watson (who was going up with spare horses) for a good fresh animal, which it

was a pleasure to feel between one's legs after the tired and worn-out brutes I had recently bestridden.

When a couple of days from Tati, I met the Hon. Cecil J. Rhodes proceeding up to Buluwayo. I was more than a little pleased to have this opportunity of meeting the great man before leaving South Africa; and the millionaire Premier, in rough garments, helping to find water for the oxen, greeted me with as genial a manner, and as cordial a smile, as if we had been old friends, and I shall be ever grateful to him for his thoughtful kindness to me in more ways than one.

The rain was coming down now, and we were riding on fast, in the hope of reaching before nightfall some pits where we were told Khama's men, who had dug there for water, had erected some small huts. As long as there was light we pushed on easily enough, but when darkness

set in we had to find our way as best we could, by means of the continuous brilliant flashes of lightning, that were so blinding as to make the succeeding darkness seem even darker than before. The horses objected to facing the rain, and we had difficulty in keeping them on the road. Eventually we got off it, and, being unable to regain it, we concluded it better to put up for the night as we were, and not spend any more time wandering about the bush in the dark. So, unsaddling and tying up the horses, we lay down in the mud and rain, and were compelled to sleep thus, being unable to make a fire to cook some tea, or even strike a match to light our pipes. In the morning, the rain having moderated, we found ourselves within a quarter of a mile of the huts. Had we but reached them during the night, we might have been saved a few twinges of rheumatism and touches of fever later on. Finding some Kaffirs here, we soon

stoked up their fire, and attempted to dry ourselves over it, while the water for tea was boiling.

Another detachment of the Bechuanaland Border Police was halted here, and after a chat, and having given our horses a good meal on "forage" (bundles of oats, small depôts of which were being left along the road) we resumed our route. It rained off and on during the whole day, the road being terribly soft and heavy for the horses, and the veldt was no better, so we had to put up at one of Khama's cattle posts, at which we arrived just after dark, and here we obtained the comforts of shelter and a good fire.

We passed several of Khama's men who had had small-pox, but, being recovered, were now returning to Palapye. It was but a short distance in from this place, and with one "off-saddle" at Lotsani River we hoped to get there about nine o'clock. We found a Dutchman and

his large family outspanned there, and learned from them that Khama was sending up some more men to help Col. Goold-Adams; we met several of them in twos and threes, all mounted and wearing European clothes. They certainly looked rather queer in their long ulster coats, carrying guns, and riding on their little horses.

My companion was bringing down a horse from Tati for a man at Palapye, and, strange to say, when he entered the stable at Tati he recognised the animal as one that had been stolen from him nearly a year previously. Having been away at Victoria Falls, of course he did not know how the horse got to Tati; but he was so certain that it was his old steed that he decided to take it first to Khama and ask his opinion as to its ownership. So as we passed the kraal of that potentate we rode in and, dismounting, went up to Khama, who was sitting on a chair surrounded by a crowd of Kaffirs squatting on the ground, to

whom he was evidently administering justice. He told Mr. Giesé that he was not sure of the horse. He said "it looked like the stolen animal," which he recollected well, but he was of opinion that "its quarters should have been more sloping," and advised him to get another opinion on the subject. This worthy and upright king has been so often described that it would be superfluous to do so again. He received me most graciously, shaking hands, and although not speaking very good English himself, appeared to understand perfectly everything I said to him. He was very anxious to hear all that had happened at Buluwayo and during our march from Mashonaland. I was exceedingly pleased to meet this man, of whom I had heard so much; and from what I saw and gathered, he is certainly a fine fellow, with a character which, even in a white man, would command respect and admiration.

On arrival at Palapye, having handed over the mails and telegrams to the Postmaster, I went up to the Bechuanaland Trading Association Mess, where I was most hospitably received by the Hon. Maurice Gifford, and found that Capt. White was still waiting for the post-cart to take him down. We heard that it had been delayed by the rains in getting to Macloutsie, and would not be in for several days to come.

Palapye is a big town of beehive-shaped huts, extending for about five miles, and struck me as being remarkably clean. I met the Rev. Mr. Moffatt, who was the British Commissioner there, and was entertained to breakfast by him, in company with Mrs. and the Rev. Mr. Helm, the missionary from Hope Fountain, near Buluwayo. They, poor people, feared that their little home at Hope Fountain was in a similar state of destruction to that of the Mission Station at Inyati, which I described, and Mr. Helm intended

going up at once to see what would be necessary to repair the damages.

The Bechuanaland Trading Association have an excellent little mess-house, and, together with every one else in the town, did their best to make our enforced sojourn there as pleasant as possible.

At length, in the small hours of the morning, we were aroused by the sound of a bugle announcing the arrival of the mail-cart, and, groping our way down from our huts to the Post Office with the aid of lanterns, we stowed ourselves away in the two-wheeled Scotch cart, in which we found, for fellow-travellers, the Rev. Father Kerr, an ex-naval officer and chief of the Jesuit Mission in Zambesia, who was coming down from Macloutsie to Ramoutsa, and who was just as pleasant and cheery a travelling companion as it has ever been my lot to meet with; Mr. Worsing, one of the proprietors of the mail-carts;

and a gentleman who was leaving Palapye on account of ill-health. The five of us were, as may be imagined, pretty tightly packed, and sleeping in an elongated position was a physical impossibility. The oxen, however, trotted gaily along, and the time sped by till we reached a town, to which I think a certificate should be granted for possessing unmistakably the "loudest smell" it has ever been my fate to experience. Here we saw the last of the oxen, and were all transferred to a coach with a team of ten mules, offering many points of resemblance to Buffalo Bill's "Deadwood Coach" of Earl's Court fame. We all crowded up on the seats as, with extra-special flogging, and an additional Kaffir to throw stones at the mules from the bank, we made a dash for, and got safely through the Notwane River, which was much swollen by the rains. These mules were lovely, sleek-coated animals, and looked as fat as butter; and,

when once inspanned, trotted along right merrily.

We entered Mafeking in the dark, and in the morning, after a very necessary but distinctly refreshing bath and comfortable breakfast, we found it a neat, compact little town surrounding a large market-square. At Dixon's Hotel there is a splendid collection of bucks' horns: amongst them I noticed a fine pair of Situtunga horns (*Tragelaphus Spekei*); but those of Mr. Isaacs' are, I think, finer. This latter gentleman had in his yard a jackal and two young "tiger" cubs, also a bird with enormously long toes, which, he told me, inhabits the swamps round Lake N'gami, and which can walk in safety over floating masses of grass and reeds.

We dined with a gentleman of the Chartered Company, and had the pleasure of meeting Mr. "Poo-bah" Powell, whose many friends will be glad to hear was flourishing, and generally

"going strong." He was especially disappointed at having missed the "good thing" at which we had been fortunate enough to be present. I was pleased also to meet Mr. Knight, of the *Times*, and of *Falcon* fame, and it was cheery work discussing our mutual friends at home in this out-of-the-way part of the British dominions.

A shaky old coach took a cargo of six men, a lady and her baby, down to Vrÿburg. It was a tight fit, but, being so closely packed, we could not be flung about and seriously injured to such an extent, by the jolting of the vehicle over big stones, as we might otherwise have been. To add to our discomfort, it rained; and the coach was not watertight.

Near Mafeking we saw clouds of locusts or "foot-kongers," and before reaching Vrÿburg had an opportunity of inspecting them at close quarters, at a place where the ground presented a blackened, burnt appearance, due to the

accomplished, and the traveller holding a "circular tourist's ticket for Zambesia" will be able to view these new countries from the seat of an "Observation Car" in about as many days as it took us weeks to accomplish the journey.

While waiting for the train at Vryburg, we received many visitors anxious for correct and detailed information as to the events of the war. Here we got all the latest English papers and some Christmas Numbers, and were much surprised to see what an amount of interest was being taken in our little war by the press at home. We found it much more interesting to read them, and learn some European news, than to study the appearance of the flat, uninteresting country stretching down to Kimberley. Long before arriving at this latter place with its fine station we could see its brilliant electric-lights shining like the diamonds found there, and illuminating the vast extent of ground over which the

works extend. I was sorry to have no chance of seeing the mines, but it was my business to hasten on, and run no risk of missing the first boat to England.

We reached Cape Town on the morning of December 9th, feeling too ragged and disgraceful-looking to be seen ; for it must be remembered that both White and myself had left Buluwayo with nothing but what we stood up in, and had been riding or travelling practically without intermission, day and night, for more than two months.

We reported ourselves to General Cameron, and paid a visit to the Governor, Sir Henry Loch, whom I found a most charming, genial, and exceptionally kind and thoughtful gentleman. I shall ever regret being unable to accept his proffered hospitality ; but as time and tide would no more wait for me than for any other man, I had to get aboard the *Garth Castle*, which was to

sail on Monday. Captain White elected to come on by the *Grantully Castle*, which was to follow on Wednesday; and we had a small bet on as to which of us would be in London first.

There were not many passengers aboard, but the captain and officers made things very pleasant for us on the voyage. We spent Christmas-day at Las Palmas, where Mr. Plimsoll, of "load-line" renown, who has done so much for the benefit of our sailors, left us, happily in better health than when he came on board at Cape Town. We went ashore and attended the military Mass in the cathedral. The music was good, but the long, dark overcoats of the troops lent a somewhat sombre air to the scene, only relieved by their white celluloid collars and cuffs, which gave them an *appearance* of cleanliness, whatever they might be under the surface. Being Christmas-time it was at first feared that there might be some delay in obtaining coal, and we

all wanted to be in England for New Year's Day; however, we found no difficulty, and were able to steam away from Grand Canary in the afternoon and eat our Christmas dinner well forward on our way home. What with exciting tournaments at "bull," and whist, and fighting for the chess-championship of the *Garth Castle*, and taking part in cheery chats in the chief-engineer's cabin, I was uncommonly sorry to say "Good-bye" as I let myself down over the side in the thick fog on the morning of the last day of 1893.

I came ashore in a small boat at Deal, the *Garth Castle* rapidly vanishing in the dense fog in which we were enveloped for several hours to the accompaniment of bells, gongs, and whistles, apparently coming out of the fog in all directions. However, we landed eventually, and after the usual custom-house formalities, I devoured even more eagerly than my lunch,

the Sunday newspaper. I was appalled to read of the disaster to poor Wilson. It is difficult to describe the shock I received at learning that my gallant commanding officer, whom I had so recently left, was killed; and the more so that had Major Forbes not selected me to take the despatches to Buluwayo I should have shared his fate.

Poor old Wilson, it is terribly sad to think that he, who had trained his little band of followers, led them to fight, and endeared himself to every single man in the Column, should not have lived to enjoy the benefit of his energy, pluck, and devotion. I have heard men say, and I mention it to show how much they thought of him as a leader, "I'd follow Wilson to hell, whereas I might think twice before following another man if he was leading me to the other place."

More than ever painful is it to think that the lives of Maj. Wilson and all his gallant comrades,

How many more gallant lives remain to be sacrificed to the task of bending Africa, the fascinating and the terrible, to the yoke of inevitable civilisation, and securing the final destruction of savagery, slavery, and ignorance? How many more heroes such as those who fought round Major Wilson, the flower of Britain's manhood, will in the future demand and deserve to be honoured as such by the Empire for whose extension they fought, wrought, and died?

"Honour to whom honour is due;" and we ought not to close without a word in praise of Lobengula himself, who acted throughout in a fine, even noble manner. His despotic laws were not exactly like those we are accustomed to in civilised countries; but personally he seems to have been always friendly to the white men, and when he found it impossible to restrain his young men, and he foresaw war, he warned all the white

men to leave his country, giving them escorts to take them down in safety. For the part he took in preserving the lives of Messrs. Ussher and Fairbairn, even after the annihilation of his finest regiments, he deserved the consideration of all the white men, and it is a very great pity that he was not allowed by his own people to surrender himself to us, and throw himself on the mercy of Dr. Jameson.

The Hon. Cecil Rhodes who originated, Dr. Jameson who undertook, Majors Forbes and Wilson, Captain Lendy, and every man who assisted in carrying to a successful termination this great undertaking, may well be proud of each other. For it was only unity of action and hearts, determination, and good old British pluck that pulled them through; and that those who escaped may live long and enjoy the benefits of the land they have added to the Imperial Dominions, is the sincere wish of the author, who,

although his efforts, both at assisting the Chartered Company and interesting the readers of his book, have fallen far below his desire, is still proud to have had the honour of accompanying the gallant Mashonalanders to their goal.

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